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September 1973 35p

Public Patronage

DOES THE ARTS COUNCIL KNOW WHAT IT'S DOING?

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Malcolm X

a Reassessment

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End of an 'Era'

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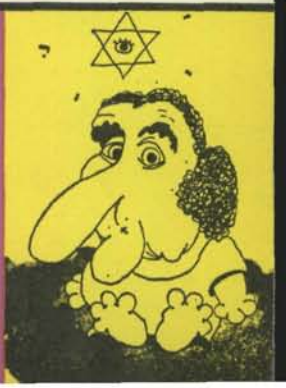

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Trashabet

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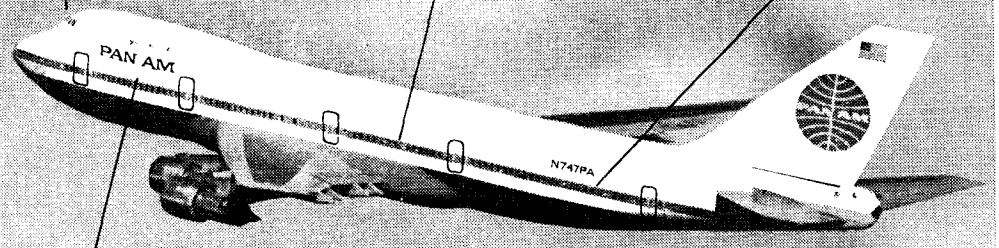

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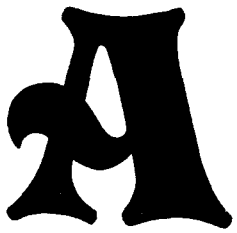

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Peter Redgrove

Trashabet

A is for ash, which is primary trash. With it I can make bash, cash, dash, fash, gash, hash, lash, mash, pash, rash, sash but not wash.

B is for buttons, which are a cross between numbers and persons. Snip a button from Joey's shirt, and it is Joey. Snip six buttons, and you have spots to arrange in an equilibrated pattern of Joey. I possess buttons stolen from everybody I have ever known; they are as good as photographs. I have filled four large grocery boxes with the buttons, and I recognise each one personally.

C is for cat's fur. If I rub this old plastic haberdasher's hand with cat's fur, it will pick up light buttons by electricity.

D is for dead wood. Sawdust, and lathe-shavings. I have my great beetle stroll over the yellow sawdust in a black dish. He leaves marks that I can interpret, I read them off as stories or drawings. Lathe-shavings may be dyed, and made into wigs.

E is for egg-shells. Glueing dust-bin eggshells together is good sport for a poor man, but there is always one piece left over.

F is for dead flies. I have one wall in my shack studded like tacks with flies' heads dried and glued to the matchboard, as other men have halls of trophies.

G is for grit. It flies everywhere in the summer, when the wind blows off the dunes. I think sometimes of my house and its treasures riding a tidal sea of shifting grit.

H is for happenings. When I recognise a button, when I complete an egg-shell, when I sell a wood-shaving dog dyed black-and-white, when I triumph over a muscular bluebottle with a rolled-up paper marked "clubhouse", these are happenings.

I is for myself. I am Midas, but not greedy. There is nothing which does not interest me, providing it costs no money.

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Trashabet

J is for jamjars. I use these as a sorcerer uses his glassware. A dead mouse in a carefully-sewn shroud rests on seven layers of grit; the particles are graded by size and colour. The shroud is the silk lining of part of my overcoat, it has a hood. The claws are crossed on the tiny chest, the jar is sealed with a page of the bible tied with waxed string. With this machine, that brims with invisible stench like evil prayers; with this corpse, that threads with silvery maggots like new guesses, that, when the maggots have pupated and risen again, buzzes with tiny voices like a church of the resurrected; with this life-machine I curse rich monks and church commissioners.

K is for Kraft paper that prolongs the life of shoes, that screens the shadow-hole of my windows. When I wish fresh air, I punch a hole with my fist.

L is for Livingstone Waterstone, which is paraffin wax. When I have a candle, the shadows flow through my boxes and rags and the air feels good like crackling water, and my house is a river of rags of light. On other occasions I never see the night, since I wake at dawn and bed at sunset. Livingstone also crackles and whispers to me. From his scratches in the air, I read off pictures and tales as well.

M is for mousetrap, that provides me with corpses. Another wall is crammed with the bright-eyed, sharp-nosed trophy heads. I used coal-chips for the eyes.

N is for the near-miss I had when I caught cold from fishing in the quarry. I lay on fire, like a horizontal Livingstone burning flames of sweat. Then all my poverty was living vivacity, without any effort of invention at all on my part, and I burned in a world that had never heard of money. This was a near-miss. I near-missed being a holy fool, I near-missed losing all my pride. There was nothing to fight.

O is for objects of no significance and great interest that have survived millions of years. In the quarry I find the fossil of a wave-ripple, the fossil of the common five-winged button-urchin, the petrified crater of a rain-drop in mud.

P is for urine, and for my staff of life, my living waterstone, that, gripped in my hands and radiating its sunny beams, reflects: I am a fruit, I am a stem; as its nitrogen sinks into the soil.

Q is for queer, which I was, and hetero, which I was, and solitary, which I am, and I preserve the best features of both. I live with myself, who am a member of my own sex; and I live with the moneyless ghost, who is a ragged girl, and who enters into more beings than human woman can. She is the buttons and the urine, and the drenched shirt, and the livingstone and the near-miss.

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Trashabet

R is for arse, which she enters when she is in my fingers, and which she leaves as stable-gas. If you do not understand this, I cannot explain it any further to you.

S is for shit, which no, I do not make trophies of, nor are they my babies. I dry it for fires and I spread it for manures, and I shall use it for hair-tonic or salad dressing if I please without asking permission.

T is for the architecture of my bed-sitting space. There is a pillar, which supports a roof. The pillar is of wood, and the roof is of iron, which is corrugated for strength and to shed the rain. The cross-piece runs north and south, the pillar penetrates the earth, which is the past and the future, and rises into the present. During my near-miss it was wreathed with vines and nests of grapes in which golden birds chattered.

U is for my uvula when I sing and my upraised arms when I dance around my tent-pole, my mouth full of white buttons.

V is for the forked twig in which I light my livingstone.

W is for the three weathers of the moon, I grow with her, I stand still in her light, my thought decays, and in the decay flash new silvery guesses; and for Writing this alphabet, which is taking me to X the cross-roads I am approaching for Y should I remain poor when Z the silvery flash-guess strikes the world to how a child is all-interested and his body made of breathing jewels, but this

Takes me round the circle to A
Which is for ambition and ashes

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Karen King & Mark Blaug

Does the Arts Council Know What It Is Doing?

An Inquiry into Public Patronage of the Arts

THE ARTS ARE SUBSIDISED in Britain to the tune of about £35 million a year, the actual figure depending to some extent on how much of radio and television we include in our definition of the Arts. £35 million is a small sum compared to public subsidies of over £2,000 million to health and to education. But small as the sum is, it raises with a vengeance the problem of evaluating government expenditure. It may be difficult to say just why we spend money in the way we do on schools and hospitals, but it is even more difficult to say why we support the Arts in one way rather than another, and in particular why we support it as little as we do compared to other countries. It is clearly impossible to evaluate government expenditure in a particular direction without knowing the aims of government, particularly as there will usually be many different aims. Even if we succeeded in drawing up a list of aims—objectives, goals, ends, the reasons why—we still face the task of somehow measuring the effectiveness of various spending patterns in achieving these aims. Since the answers—one for each objective—are quite likely to go in opposite directions, we need a scale of priorities between objectives to arrive at a comprehensive evaluation. We label this evaluation technique "cost-effectiveness analysis" and in principle it is as applicable to the Arts as it is to any other area of government activity, although in practice it may be particularly difficult to apply to the Arts.

Be this as it may, we must clearly begin with a statement of objectives. Unless we get this right, evaluation is impossible on anybody's theory of evaluation. In this article we examine the objectives of the Arts Council in subsidising the Arts and we will, therefore, confine ourselves to those aspects of the Arts supported by them. Although the Council is only responsible for about one-third of all public expenditure on the Arts (the remainder being largely devoted to museums and galleries), it exerts a more significant influence on the Arts than other public bodies, such as local authorities. Its subsidies cover all major art forms including opera, ballet, orchestras, theatre, cinema and, to a lesser degree, art galleries and the experimental arts.

Our evidence derives mainly from the Annual Reports of the Arts Council. These reports concentrate on the financial aspects of the Council's activities but they always contain a brief section on policy issues. The space allocated to balance sheets reflects the Council's consistently maintained view of public accountability:

> Money, rough-hew it how we may, is the subject of all our Annual Reports. Indeed, the view gains currency in St. James's Square that everything in them outside the Accounts is properly called "extraneous matter"[1]. (1965–66)

THIS ARTICLE *continues our critical discussion of "culture and government." We have published in previous* ENCOUNTERS *Eugène Ionesco's critique of the UNESCO bureaucracy ("Letter from Helsinki", December* 1972*) and Leopold Labedz's analysis of "Culture and the Détente" (May 1973).*

MARK BLAUG *is Professor of the Economics of Education in the University of London, and the author of "Ricardian Economics" (1958), "Economic Theory in Retrospect" (1968), and "Introduction to the Economics of Education" (1970), and co-editor of "The Practice of Man-Power Forecasting" (1972).* KAREN KING *is a graduate of the London School of Economics, and an Assistant Research Officer at the Institute of Education's Research Unit in the Economics of Education.*

[1] All subsequent references of this kind refer to the dates of publication of the Annual Reports of the Arts Council. Chairmen of the Arts Council have been:
Lord Keynes (1946), Economist.
Sir Ernest Pooley (1946–53), Barrister.
Sir Kenneth Clark (1953–60), Art historian and critic.
Lord Cottesloe (1960–65), Businessman and public administrator.
Lord Goodman (1965–72), Solicitor.
Patrick Gibson (1972), Publisher.

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Nevertheless, the Council has always acknowledged the right of outsiders to ask the reasons why:

> There is a need to satisfy our readers who pay taxes but may not like reading balance-sheets, that we have not wasted their money and intend to spend it to even better advantage in the future. (1965–66)

The central problem to which we address ourselves is simply: What is a "waste" of money in the field of the Arts, and how would one recognise waste if one saw it?

1. The Role of the Arts Council

IN HIS INTRODUCTORY SPEECH, heralding the creation of the Arts Council in 1946, Lord Keynes asserted that:

> The purpose of the Arts Council of Great Britain is to create an environment, to breed a spirit, to cultivate an opinion, to offer a stimulus to such purpose that the artist and the public can each sustain and live on the other in that union which has occasionally existed in the past at the great ages of a communal civilised life. (1945)

A more explicit statement did not appear until four years later, when Sir Ernest Pooley, acting as Chairman, referred to the Council as: "a very important experiment—State support for the arts without State control. We prefer not to control, though sometimes we must; we want to support, encourage and advise" (1948–49).

Clearly, the Council saw itself playing a prominent and active role, a nucleus around which artistic activity would revolve. However, the nuclear concept was not expressed until many years later: "the Arts Council's essential function was not to act as the universal provider but as the centre and focus of activities which might otherwise remain for ever unrealised hopes" (1967–68). The position of acting simply as a cashier dispensing funds was vigorously rejected from the beginning and the Council described its role as "not merely the pay-master of the arts, but in some sense the national trustee for the arts" (1951–52). The term "trustee" could imply a mere "watchdog" role, or it might be stretched to include the idea of promoting new trends. Apparently it is the latter which the Council had in mind, since subsequent reports repeatedly stress the need for a forward-looking, active approach:

> "There is another function which the Arts Council is seeking to develop: that of encouraging the production of new work in music, drama, poetry and painting. Just as scholarship depends upon experiment and research so do the arts need replenishment by contemporary innovation." (1955–56)

Despite the stress laid on innovation, however, the Council has never openly assumed the dynamic role of catalyst in the Arts. Repeated references in the Annual Reports suggest that the conflict between a hands-off policy and one of "effective leadership" has never been decisively resolved. The problem is that of avoiding the Scylla of *laissez-faire* while likewise avoiding the Charybdis of artistic paternalism.

Unhappy with a near-monopoly position as public patron of the Arts, the Council soon advocated a diversification of sources of subsidy, in order to tap local initiative and enthusiasm. It is clear from the Council's detailed proposals for new Civic Arts Trusts that considerable thought has been given to the matter of how best to promote local efforts in the Arts:

> What might be the functions of a civic Arts Trust? The first might be to consider what annual provision in the various arts the city enjoys or lacks at present. Another might be to examine the reasons why some of that provision is deficient; is it, for instance, through the inadequacy of theatres and concert halls? Or through bad staff work among the managements of provincial towns? Or through the city's neglect to guarantee or underwrite the visit of some notable company? There are, again, some puzzling equations to be solved. Why was such and such a visit to the town a roaring success when another, of equal merit, proved a dismal failure? What are the seasonal, the social, and the economic factors in these contradictions? Much of what we hear about these matters at present is gossip and speculation and one of the basic activities of a civic Arts Trust would be to discover the reasons why a city is so inadequately or sporadically provided with some or all of the arts. Map-making of this kind is one of the initial functions of such a trust. Another preliminary exercise is that of costing the arts: finding out what the city must provide in entrance money and subsidy to secure the various companies it wishes to see. (1953–54)

In the light of the evidently strong belief in local action, it is surprising that five years were to elapse before any initiative was taken, namely, the creation of the first Regional Arts Association (RAA) in 1958. Although "more than two thirds of the Council's grant is spent outside London" (1970–71), the English RAAs together receive only about 5% of the Council's budget; the rest is provided directly to individual artistic organisations. A statement by Lord Eccles, in a House of Lords debate on the RAAs, referred to the need for more locally based and locally financed activities, since the regions still depended on "direct subsidies from the Arts Council plus events produced, packaged and subsidised in or from London and then sent round the provinces" (*Hansard*, Vol. 329, No. 55, 22 March 1972). This observation is borne out in the latest report: "The Council . . . is in the main regionally—not London—orientated, and this is insufficiently understood. Of the

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total number of grants made, 90% go outside London" (1971–72).

THE ARTS COUNCIL IS, of course, well aware of the administrative problems created by the artistic dominance of London, combined with its own financial dominance over total public expenditure on the performing and creative Arts.

> There would be little "mutual benefit" if the Arts Council channelled all its assistance through the Regional Associations to named recipients without giving the association any say in the disposal of these funds. On the other hand, it is *intra vires* the Regional Association, and [it is] quite right and proper, for them to allocate funds in support of local enterprises which have little or no claim to Arts Council support within the terms of our Charter. . . . It is perhaps easier to see than to define the principles to be followed in this case; the presence of an Arts Council representative as an assessor in the councils of the associations is the most effective safeguard. Another potential difficulty arises over the presence of a recognised client of the Arts Council (orchestra, repertory company, touring organization) within the boundaries of a Regional Association which we also support. Who is to provide the subsidy? The Arts Council alone? But then where is the "mutual benefit"? The Association? but we have direct obligation to our client, of which we cannot divest ourselves. This is a fine field for the elaboration of case-law; the extremes to be avoided are, first, treating the Regional Associations as mere post-offices, and secondly, allowing them the sort of autonomy that constitutionally belongs to the Scottish and Welsh Committees of Council (this is something we are not entitled to devolve upon anyone in England). (1964–65)

In their statement welcoming the formation of the RAAs, the Council expressed the hope that "such bodies will prove a rod for the Arts Council's back." It would be interesting to know how much truth there is in this assertion. Unfortunately, the Annual Reports confine themselves to the purely positive aspects of the relationship between the Council and these local bodies. However, with the immediate prospect of a 40% increase in grants to the regional associations, it has become more important than ever for the Council to define clearly its role in the total system of public patronage to the Arts. We need merely note that this is *still* an unresolved aspect of the role of the Arts Council.

IT IS IN THE REALM of advice that the Council has perhaps contributed most to the Arts. Certainly the Annual Reports have been more articulate on this aspect of their work than on any other:

> The wording of the Charter is no doubt judicious: advice and cooperation come before holding and dealing with money. We can sometimes enjoy ourselves in the role of *sugar-daddy* to the arts, but we are at present more often, better and more characteristically employed as match-makers, midwives and nannies. . . . It is by the fruit of much patient and inconspicuous discussion and correspondence, fieldwork, expert counsel and personal liaison that we must justify our existence. (1962–63)

Moreover, these functions were not limited merely to large and influential institutions but were extended to cover small and relatively unimportant concerns.

> While respecting the rights of self-government of all the bodies it supports, the Council devotes much time and attention to the policy of these bodies. It gives guidance at one end of the scale in advising an obscure *music society* on a programme of work suitable for its means and its membership. And at the other end of the scale, it conducts a patient and independent scrutiny of the artistic and economic conditions of Grand Opera. (1951–52)

OF ALL THE ORIGINAL AIMS of the Arts Council—"to encourage, support and advise"—the third is undoubtedly the most consistent of its functions. But it still remains to be seen in what sense "encouragement" has been given; it still remains to analyse the value of the achievements of the Council and to ask how far this has been a fulfilment of Keynes' original ideal. The Arts Council itself has never pretended to pass ultimate judgment on its own contribution, or even to settle once and for all the proper scope of its activities:

> The major problem is to define our scope. We remain and always will remain an auxiliary body. Artistic activity would, happily, continue without us, and the contribution we can make to promoting artistic output will always be arguable. On this score we take a modest view. We have no evidence that poets, authors, painters or composers—or any creative workers—are the more fertile because we exist and give them our support. It would be complacent to entertain such belief. (1966–67)

But a year later they claimed a little more:

> That Britain is no longer "the country without music" (or any of the other arts for that matter) is largely due to the patient work of the Arts Council over the past twenty years or so in supporting and encouraging performing, and to a lesser extent, creative artists. (1968–69)

A recent Annual Report sums up the contribution of the Council over 26 years of existence:

> Despite all the things we have not done and all the things we have done but ought not to have done, and all the things that still need to be done, the Arts Council is a good and worthy institution in a wicked world. It has provided a stimulus and a sense of purpose to a great many people and a great many projects. Much that is good would have been lost without it. Much that is hopeful would never have seen the light of day and some things that are purposeless and pointless and positively nasty would have continued to maintain unproved pretensions. (1970–71)

It seems ironic that as far back as 1952–53, the Arts Council was asserting that: "Public patronage, whatever form it takes, must select its roles

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and objectives with precision, and that is one of the lessons the Arts Council is beginning to learn." It is difficult, however, to find any evidence in subsequent reports that the lesson has actually been learned. If it had, our critique would have been redundant.

2. The Case for Subsidies

THE ANNUAL REPORTS HAVE devoted considerable space to the rationale for the existence of an organisation like the Arts Council. There is clearly no difficulty in finding economic arguments for subsidising the Arts. The standard reasons in economic theory for involving government intervention apply at least in part to the Arts and, in addition, there are special grounds for subsidising artistic activity.

The standard reasons have to do with causes of "*market failure*" (either economies of large scale production, or external costs and benefits, or consumer ignorance, or any combination of these, inhibit the operation of the market mechanism) and with the case of "*public goods*" (certain goods cannot be priced at all by a market because as soon as they are produced for one person, others cannot be excluded from consuming them). It is not clear whether these arguments actually apply to the Arts but, in any case, demand and supply of the Arts are highly interdependent. Tastes, and hence demand, tend to be stimulated by the mere provision of artistic facilities. For these reasons, the market mechanism may be an inefficient instrument for allocating resources to the Arts.

Moreover, there is the thesis (associated with the name of Baumol) which asserts that the real costs of producing artistic activity are bound to rise in the course of economic growth. There is little scope for cost-reducing technical progress in the Arts, but the wages and salaries of artistic personnel tend to rise in step with wages and salaries in general. The result is a constant cost-push in the Arts, and hence public patronage is required to ensure a continual supply.[2]

Lastly, traditional welfare economics is silent about the question of income distribution. The market tends to equate effective demand with available supply, and effective demand clearly depends on the existing distribution of purchasing power among individuals. But many members of the electorate object fundamentally to the idea of distributing artistic goods and services on the basis of current purchasing power; in short, they have definite preferences about an equitable distribution of the Arts. This, too, might constitute a reason for government support of the Arts.[3]

NONE OF THESE ARGUMENTS appear in the Annual Reports. It is interesting, however, that the Arts Council, while dismissing almost all their critics as "backwoodsmen", nevertheless expends much effort in defending itself against a vaguely specified attack on the very idea of public patronage of the Arts. Their defence rests essentially on what we might call "the vacuum theory": the establishment of the Welfare State with its principle of redistributive taxation destroyed private patronage of the Arts and consequently created a vacuum which only government can fill. This theme is repeated time and again. The survival of the Arts now depends on government subsidies, and if these were withdrawn the end of artistic life would immediately follow.

> If the arts are to survive somebody must pay for them, and if the burden of subsidy, purchase or guarantee has become too heavy for the private patron it must be shouldered by the public. . . . The health, the education, the social welfare, the national defence of the people have all become the collective responsibility of the people, and no taxpayer or ratepayer can contract out of the obligation to contribute to the upkeep of the necessities and amenities of the Welfare State. The preservation of the fine arts is another of these collective responsibilities.[4] (1952–53)

The 22nd report returns to the "vacuum theory", combining it with notions of a "civilised" optimum amount of the Arts:

> There are few thinking people to whom the need for artistic subsidy would have to be justified today. It is not a matter of choice. In some ways it might be preferable to live in a society where the measure of private support for our activities obviated the need for State assistance. But such a society has totally ceased to exist. The fiscal policies of every government in our memory have contributed to a situation where private bounty or investment is now totally inadequate to sustain a civilised ration of music and theatre, of poetry and picture. Nor need we be remotely apologetic in asking for the modest sums we need for our purposes from the public purse. The Government has garnered in much, if not most, of the wealth that cultured patricians and public-spirited industrialists could formerly bestow. It

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[2] W. Baumol and W. G. Bowen, *Performing Arts—The Economic Dilemma* (New York, 1966).

[3] It is not clear that this is an additional reason. Preferences on the part of one individual about another individual's consumption of the Arts may be interpreted as a so-called "consumption externality", in which case it is already dealt with under the heading of "market failure." For further discussion, see A. T. Peacock, "Welfare Economics and Public Subsidies to the Arts," *Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies* (XXXVII, December 1969).

[4] Earlier we quoted a statement from the 1966–67 Report to the effect that "Artistic activity would, happily, continue without us, and the contribution we can make to promoting artistic output will always be arguable"—which appears to contradict the passage just cited. However, such inconsistencies appear throughout all the Reports.

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> holds a portion of its treasury charged with a trust to use it for our purposes—and in fairness, the growth of the Arts Council in scope and importance demonstrates governmental recognition of this principle. (1966–67)

In short, the Arts Council exists to give back what the Inland Revenue has taken away! If so, might not a change in the tax laws be a better way of subsidising the Arts? Would it not, at any rate, be a good question to think about?

ANOTHER COUNCIL ARGUMENT is based on the idea that education systematically fosters an appreciation of the Arts. Since education is largely financed from the Exchequer, it follows that the Arts have equal claim to be publicly supported: "we should allocate more money than we do to ensure them [school children] an adequate provision in later life of those arts for which they are given some appetite in school" (1955–56). However, if the enjoyment of the Arts merely extends the educative process, the question of *who actually attends* subsidised performances becomes paramount. A study by Baumol and Bowen, based on both American and British audiences, found that the average theatre- and concert-goer was a university graduate, earning nearly twice the median income of the population.[5] In other words, if education fosters an appreciation of the Arts, it is not to school-leavers that we must look for evidence of the proposition. Moreover, believing as it does, the Council appears to have done very little to promote an interest in the Arts in schools; at least the Annual Reports make no mention of any co-operative ventures with the Department of Education and Science.

Besides, it is difficult to square this faith in schooling as a great promoter of life-long interest in the Arts with the Council's defensive attitude about the low popularity rating of so many of the activities which it supports. These subsidies are, typically, defended by the argument that the tastes of the *discriminating few* are of *more* consequence because they are seeking "enlightenment" and not just "entertainment": "there are abundant precedents to justify the public patronage of the arts for the benefit of the considerable minority who have cultivated a taste for serious pleasures" (1951–52).

This is precisely the supercilious attitude which Sir Ernest Pooley, one-time chairman of the Council, warned against:

> And do let us be gay; let us have entertainment. I never quite know what "highbrow" exactly means, but in so far as it is a term of reproach, let us not be highbrow. You can have high standards of performance without being highbrow. The arts can provide for those who appreciate them a fuller life and greater happiness. But don't submit to that depressing sense of superiority and that "preciousness", too often affected by arts clubs and arts circles. Don't let us be afraid of being amused. (1948–49)

However, subsequent reports have ignored this entreaty and have proceeded to justify particular expenditures on grounds tantamount to "preciousness."[6]

NEARLY ALL THE Annual Reports have stressed the gross inadequacy of present grants to the Arts. The Arts, they say, find themselves permanently on the edge of insolvency, and this tends to affect their standard of performance.

> The need for public money arises not because our theatres and opera houses, our concerts and our art exhibitions are inefficiently run, or failing to draw a public. Rather the reverse. In part it arises because of their success. Subsidy is needed if the public appetite, which is now so clearly demonstrated, is to be satisfied by performances and works of the highest standard.[7] (1968–69)

This implies that a subsidy is needed merely to maintain standards of production, irrespective of the level of demand. Yet two years earlier they stated: "If we could reach the point where public support was so effectively stimulated as to make subsidies unnecessary this would be a supreme justification of our work" (1966–67).

In view of the fact that Covent Garden played to 91% capacity in 1968–69, while Stratford reached 97% capacity in the 1970–71 season, and both receive support from the Arts Council, it is difficult to evaluate this contention. The statement clearly implies that increasing attendance would dispense with the need for subsidies—in which case what are we to make of the figures for attendance rates just cited?

That *some* subsidy is necessary may be readily agreed upon; but the amount required is still open to argument. This must obviously depend upon the potential revenue from the Arts. It would be interesting to discover on what grounds the Council bases its ticket pricing policy. Its approach to the question of ticket prices, however, has been ambiguous and contradictory. The 9th Annual Report states that: "In many establishments there have, indeed, been marginal in-

[5] Baumol and Bowen, *Performing Arts*, p. 92.

[6] On other occasions, however, the Council has *denied* that it caters for minority tastes: "We are not a luxury; we do not cater for a small élite out of the pockets of a protesting multitude. We supply a commodity which a great many people require and which can make a better life for a great many more once their appetite and interest has been awakened" (1966–67).

[7] The fourth Annual Report said: "It is a mistake to think that the Arts must necessarily be subsidised. A great number of concerts, plays and exhibitions are and should be, self-supporting. Financial support is frequently both unnecessary and undesirable" (1951–52). But this appears to be a momentary aberration from the constant theme.

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creases in theatre and concert prices, but it would be idle to pretend that there is any hope of coaxing the public to pay much more for its arts than it does at present" (1953–54). A year later, however, they altered their previous stand: "A rapid jolt in prices no doubt would put audiences off; a steady acceleration of prices over the years would not" (1954–55). Two years later they stated:

> Whether admission charges are being raised enough to keep pace with rising costs is a matter for argument; yet where they are being increased consumer-resistance is not fulfilling the woeful predictions of the more timorous theatre and concert promoters. . . . Everything must continue to be done by the promoters of opera and music and drama to match admission prices as closely as possible to rising costs. (1956–57)

Ten years later the Director of the Royal Festival Hall pointed out to the Estimates Committee:[8]

> I would say in general that prices of seats are increasing all the time. All promoters are trying to get that extra bit out of the box office. They are increasing some of the prices. They could keep the price range exactly as it is by having the same number of seats at each price but by having more of the middle and higher priced seats they can get a higher capacity from the house.

If it is in fact possible to charge higher admission prices as time passes and costs rise, it is not clear why subsidies are necessary. *To maintain standards? to enlarge audiences? to cultivate new audiences?* The questions are obvious, but no answers are to be found in the Annual Reports.

3. Policy Dilemma: The Conflict of Goals

THE MOST CLEARLY DEFINED statement of aims which the Arts Council has so far offered appeared in the 11th Annual Report. These were "(*a*) the improvement of professional standards of performance; (*b*) selective diffusion (of the Arts); (*c*) local responsibility (for the Arts); and (*d*) the provision of buildings (for the Arts)" (1955–56). A limited budget has given prominence to the first and second goals: artistic standards and selective diffusion have become the Council's over-riding preoccupation.

Even here, however, there has been constant soul-searching. Should expenditure be concentrated on maintaining a few selected strongholds of high artistic achievement? Or would it be preferable to disperse the available funds over a wider geographical area?

> The Charter of the Arts Council enunciates a double purpose—(a) that the Council should seek to elevate standards of performance and (b) that it should endeavour to spread the appreciation of the arts. The Council has sought to observe both these injunctions. But the size of the budget in a period of rising costs may require it to re-examine how far both these objectives may be simultaneously secured. Is it wiser in such times as these to consolidate standards, rather than pursue a policy of wider dispersal? (1950–51)

They argue that since "high standards can only be built on a limited scale", the emphasis must fall on standards:

> The primary responsibility imposed by its Royal Charter is to preserve and improve standards of performance in the various arts. The Arts Council interprets this injunction, in relation to its income, as implying the support of a limited number of institutions where exemplary standards may be developed. (1955–56)

These statements clearly reveal the emphasis which the Council has always placed on "excellence." This emphasis is sometimes rationalised (as in the previous statement) by appealing to the constraints of a limited budget. At times, however, it is advocated on deeper grounds as the right policy in and of itself:

> But even if that income were double what it is, the duty of the Arts Council would still be to nourish good standards of production and performance, rather than attempt a premature and ambitious scale of diffusion. Public patronage of the arts is a long term obligation: it must grow like the mustard-seed, not like the beanstalk. (1959–60)

The Arts Council has firmly held to this position, at least until recently. That they have been successful in achieving the goal of raising artistic standards is almost obvious from the esteem in which British drama, music, ballet and opera is held throughout the world.

However, the goal of selective "diffusion" is more difficult to appraise. The term "diffusion" as employed by the Arts Council has connotations over and above that of mere dispersal. Sometimes it refers to the conflict raised by concentrating on London rather than the regions; sometimes it refers to a contrast between regional concentration and widespread diffusion throughout Britain in small towns and rural areas; and on occasion it refers to diffusion to a larger, less homogeneous audience. As these are not consciously viewed as different aspects of the problem, the result has been to confuse the entire issue of wider dissemination of the Arts.

LET US TAKE, FIRST OF ALL, the question of London versus the regional cities. The Council pleads that it is not responsible for amenities in London as opposed to the relative deprivation of provincial cities:

[8] Eighth Report of the Estimates Committee of the House of Commons, *Grants for the Arts* (London, October 1968).

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> The capital city is also the metropolis of the nation's art: the home, for example, of its National Gallery and its British Museum. It is both proper and inevitable that its National Opera House should be located there as well. Secondly, it was not the Arts Council which decided to establish these three institutions [i.e. Covent Garden, Sadler's Wells and the Old Vic]. The Arts Council did not decide to give half its money to London; it decided to act as patron to certain institutions already established, and of these the most meritorious and representative were situated in London. If any provincial city had assumed the responsibility for creating and maintaining, say, Sadler's Wells, the Arts Council would gladly have become its patron. It is highly improbable, in fact, that any large city in the Provinces could provide a continuous home for opera and ballet; they have insufficient catchment areas (or visitors) to supply the large audience and income an operation of such magnitude requires. (1955–56)

But, of course, this says nothing about the question of touring the provinces, which is sometimes employed as a reason for subsidising London-based companies.

> One very large fraction of its [the Council's] revenue goes to subsidising such National Institutions as Covent Garden, Sadler's Wells and the Old Vic, which, although located in London, are as much a national inheritance as the British Museum, the National Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum. They even manage, in spite of innumerable difficulties, to tour many provincial centres; and the proportion of our budget which they absorb may reasonably be debited to the country as a whole, rather than to London. (1950–51)

Nonetheless, the Arts Council admits to weaknesses in its standards for distributing funds, on one occasion going so far as to say that "The diffusion of the arts on their higher levels is at present sporadic, unplanned and unequal" (1953–54).

> If a moratorium could be declared in the arts the present design of subsidy might indeed be radically altered. If it were possible—or ever had been possible at a given moment—to lay down a plan of subsidy based on ideal requirements in terms of music, drama, opera and ballet the structure of subsidy would doubtless be better balanced than it is. (1957–58)

This is the view that many critics of the Arts Council would no doubt endorse, although what form an "ideal" subsidy pattern would take is unclear, especially as regional inhabitants would presumably hold different concepts of what constitutes a "perfect" subsidy pattern. Indeed, they might dispute the following statement referring to "arts trusts" as being little short of a gross misrepresentation of the facts: "The Arts Council recognises its obligations to these bodies and by its continued and increasing support of them will ensure the Provinces an abundant share of the available arts." (1955–56)

The second facet of diffusion is that of regionalism on the broadest possible scale to embrace the "cultural deserts" outside the regional cities. The Annual Report of 1951 asked the question: "Is it good policy to encourage small, ill-equipped expeditions to set out into the wilderness and present meagre productions in village fit-ups?" (1950–51). The intended answer is obviously *No*. But in trying to justify this attitude they rely exclusively on the costliness of living up to the doctrine of "fair shares."

> How far, then, should diffusion go? This notion of diffusion is liable, in a democracy like ours, to get mixed up with the political axiom of "fair shares". When this happens it leads to the argument that, since the tax payers in Caithness or Cardigan contribute to the funds voted to the Arts Council, they should have their "share" of the cornucopia of provision. But the economic consequences of this supposition are daunting and conclusive. (1952–53)

The dilemma that results from this conflict of aims has proved difficult to resolve, and the Annual Reports have time and time again attempted to pour oil on troubled waters.

> We are of course already providing art-below-cost. The crux of this policy is "How much below cost?" At what point in the arithmetic progression of subsidy are we to stop? The bearing of this problem upon the accepted scale of diffusion of the arts is evident. As the figure of subsidy rises, how soon will it become expended, in the main, upon the kind of diffusion which can only be a dilution? Or when will it cease to operate, whatever its size, because there develops a dearth of the product it exists to diffuse? There is, evidently, a limit to the "potential" of the arts. (1952–53)

A meaningful answer to these questions depends on some quantitative estimate of the price-elasticity of demand for the Arts in different places and among different audiences. Are consumers more responsive to ticket prices in cities than in rural areas? If so, the distribution of subsidies can be altered so as to take such differences into account. If, for example, the demand in rural areas is relatively inelastic, prices can be raised and subsidies redirected to the cities. This is a separate issue from that of the principle of diffusion. What is not clear in the Council's statement is whether they wish to satisfy an existing demand (in which case demand may be taken to be comparatively inelastic) or whether to encourage new demand (which would undoubtedly require lower-priced tickets to attract those who now stay away).

This difficulty is largely confined to music and drama since the cost of "diffusing" paintings and sculpture is comparatively low. The Arts Council itself, therefore, directly finances "travelling art exhibitions" throughout Britain. The problem of rural isolation is, to some extent, mitigated by the provision of travelling grants to enable the less accessible areas to organise low-cost trips to the theatre: "the Arts Council should be diligent in

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developing better facilities for the public to see the arts at their best and one such facility is the provision of coach parties to concerts and plays." (1955–56).

This was the most obvious and logical solution to the situation, and its widespread use would ensure a more equitable, albeit far from "perfect" distribution of the Arts. However, in spite of some success with such policies, their analysis of the problem is puzzling. "The achievement and preservation of standards in the arts is, primarily, then, the role of the professional just as the task of diffusing the arts outside the cities is largely the business of the amateur." (1955–56). In the same report, moreover, they contradict themselves by asking:

> A matter highly relevant to this problem of how far the Arts Council should carry diffusion is the transformation wrought by radio. . . . With astonishing rapidity broadcasting is assuming the role of Universal Diffusor; and to that extent making it more vital than ever to preserve strongholds of standard in a limited number of places. (1955–56)

The residents outside the cities were, therefore, expected to be content with the "mass media" plus participation in amateur activities. However, in recent years the emphasis has moved much more in favour of the regions. The 23rd Annual Report stated:

> London presents a special problem: it is foolish to regard it as sufficiently served by artistic and cultural amenities to a point where it can now be neglected in favour of other areas, but simple justice compels us to call a relative halt to expansion in many London plans and institutions until at least something comparable to the London "density" of culture is available in other parts of the country. (1967–68)

The previous year had stressed "the view now firmly held in this country—that metropolitan culture, however rich and varied, cannot be a total substitute for local and regional institutions" (1968–69). Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the Arts Council has seriously attempted to achieve the goal of regional diffusion. Although public funds spent on the Arts in the regions has increased in absolute terms, the *proportion* has in fact remained constant since 1965.[9]

THE THIRD ASPECT OF DIFFUSION is concerned with the cultivation of *new audiences*, either for the Arts as traditionally conceived or for hitherto ignored and despised varieties, such as jazz, pop, folk music, etc. The Report of 1966 emphasised "the major purpose for which we must use our money . . . is to cultivate new audiences for the arts", and this goal has been reiterated in subsequent Reports.

[9] P.E.P. Report, "Public Patronage of the Arts", *Planning* (XXXI, November 1965).

However, there is no indication that the policy of cultivating new audiences has been given priority in the Council's objectives. To be sure, audiences for the Arts have grown over the years but so has the demand for privately produced and privately financed entertainment. Without launching a single survey of audience participation in the Arts, the Council nevertheless draws inspiration from what it takes to be a trend towards mass audiences: "Within our society there is now a widespread feeling that the provision of drama and music and painting and all culture in its broadest sense is no longer to be regarded as a privilege for a few but is the democratic right of the whole community" (1968–69). How is this "widespread feeling" to be made manifest? Is it by increasing Council grants to the RAAs so that local bodies are able to respond more fully to their particular needs, or by increasing aid to experimental projects which at present, together with the Arts Associations, arts festivals, literature and experimental projects, comprise only 11% of the Council's budget?

The present distribution of subsidies shows that, although 90% of the total *number* of grants are given to the regions, spending still remains disproportionately in favour of London. At present Covent Garden, Sadler's Wells, the National Theatre, and the Royal Shakespeare Company together receive 39% of the total budget for England. 17% is spent on music (including other grants to opera and ballet companies, *e.g.* the Festival Ballet). The fifty-odd repertory theatres throughout England together receive 6%, while expenditure on art (including regional exhibitions, films on tour, the Hayward and Serpentine Galleries) amounting to 5% Literature (including grants for writers and poets and work in schools) receives less than 1% as do the experimental projects and art centres. Regional arts associations receive 5% and the remainder is spent on new buildings for the arts and education in the arts.

Some critics feel that Covent Garden is excessively subsidised. Whether true or not, the question in the present context is whether the amount spent on Covent Garden can be justified on the grounds of audience appeal? If not, what becomes of the goal of gaining new audiences? "We have tried very hard", the Council says, "to use our resources as sensibly and as equitably as possible. We have tried to supply the growing needs of a society increasingly conscious of the value of the arts to civilised life" (1970–71). But what are the Council's criteria for deciding that funds are spent "as sensibly and equitably as possible"? The 22nd Annual Report stated: "We shall try to make our judgments more scientific and less rule-of-thumb, but to a large extent they

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must remain inspirational—others might find a less flattering word" (1966–67). Yes, indeed.

4. Criteria for Subsidy: A Pattern for Patronage?

THE VAGUE, IMPRECISE NATURE of the statements concerning the aims of the Arts Council, as embodied in the Charters of 1945 and 1967—"that of developing a greater knowledge, practice and understanding to the people throughout the realm and to improve standards of execution"—has enabled the Arts Council to evade the problem of defining precise criteria in their selection procedures.

In discussing the issue, the Council has always emphasised the "efficiency" of the recipient bodies in the sense of exemplary accountancy practices (1952–53). Efficiency in administrative practices appears to be the *only* justification which the Council has ever offered for selecting one artistic organisation rather than another, despite their own admission that "the thrift and probity of financial administration, necessary as they are, do not vindicate the ultimate use of money" (1968–69).

The Estimates Committee to examine the Arts Council and its subsidised organisations found that: "not one single instance was brought to their notice, or suggested, of extravagance or wastage by Arts Council customers. And there was not a vestige of a suggestion of anything but the most proper and scrupulous use of the funds which we so widely disbursed into so many quarters." Consequently, they concluded that: "what the Arts Council was doing was needed to be done and, what is more, that the sums of money it was administering were inadequate and should be augmented. . . ."

Budgetary efficiency is surely an inadequate justification for the activities of the Arts Council. Its effectiveness can only be judged in terms of "what . . . was needed to be done." This, unfortunately, remains undefined.

The issue is not only that of evolving criteria to evaluate *competing claims* for subsidy, but also one of deciding just *what areas* the Council should be subsidising. Take, for example, the question of whether to support jazz or not. This turns on the vexed question of what is "Art" and what is "Entertainment". The Annual Reports used to contain statements such as: "The Arts Council's concern is with the fine arts exclusively which are only part of entertainment, however strongly we may hold that they are the best and most important part" (1963–64); the function of the Council is to "nurture the arts, not provide popular amenities in that field" (1959–60).

This conservative bias was consistently maintained throughout all Annual Reports until 1969—and then a new view made its abrupt appearance. In the 24th Annual Report the emphasis is on "throwing a bridge across to the young", thereby manifesting a sudden consciousness of whole sectors of peripheral artistic activities hitherto ignored. The metamorphosis has produced so much controversy and heated debate that it has become more imperative than ever for the Arts Council to establish some basic principles rather than to continue its policy of allowing the respective expert panels to decide what, or what not, to subsidise.

HOW, FOR EXAMPLE, DO THEY JUSTIFY the recent decision to subsidise the Theatre Investment Fund? The 22nd report discussed the possibility of giving direct aid to commercial theatres in order "to co-operate with its best elements." The purpose of this Fund, however, is to encourage provincial touring of successful London productions of musicals, comedies, etc.[10] As these cannot possibly be defended in terms of the Council's usual standard of "the best in the arts", the decision implies either that their standards of "good drama" have now changed to encompass "entertainment" or they have come to feel that it is their function to provide what the "public" wants to see, regardless of whether or not it can be considered "art".

The Arts Council is proud of its policy of total freedom of expression for its recipient bodies and individuals. Since it lays down no principles—at least in print—it is difficult to see how competing requests for aid are in fact compared. "More for one means less for another" is a truism which contributes little understanding to the problem. Neither do vague statements like:

> The test for eligibility for support is easier to sense than to define but in broad terms the beneficiary must have merit or promise of merit, appeal or prospect of appeal and must satisfy a discriminating need. (1969–70)

This statement is particularly interesting in view of the evidence given the previous year to the Estimates Committee:

> It would be complacent to suggest that we have not evolved any scientific principles because we are dealing, to a very large extent, with a historic backwash. We have started to introduce principles.[11] (1968)

If, indeed, there are underlying principles or guidelines to decisions, the Arts Council has appeared remarkably reluctant to give an account of them. There has been no attempt to clarify the

[10] *New Society* (3 August 1972), p. 249.
[11] 8th Report of the Estimates Committee, 1968.

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situation in subsequent reports (and, surprisingly enough, the Estimates Committee did not ask for an explanation of the above statement).

5. *The Confusion of "Subjectivity"*

THERE IS A CONSTANT TENDENCY in the Annual Reports to take refuge in the inherent subjectivity of all artistic judgments. "We endeavour to discharge our duties with a very real consciousness of our own fallibility and the rooted imperfection of all artistic judgment" (1966–67)

Of course, in the final analysis artistic judgments are subjective, and so are the objectives that underlie all expenditures on the Arts. What is *not* subjective, however, is the degree to which spending on one activity rather than another achieves a particular objective. For example, if our goal is to promote opera in the regions, we may have difficulty in deciding whether to spend a given sum on Verdi or on Michael Tippett; but the question is, at least in principle, capable of being answered objectively. Or, alternatively, if our goal is to find new audiences for the Arts, it is not a question of deciding whether John Cage is better than Richard Rodgers but whether a Cage recital will attract as large an audience as a Rodgers concert. Thus, it is perfectly possible to lay down selection criteria even though artistic judgments are subjective.

One way out of the dilemma of subjectivity might be to rely on audience response. The Arts Council, however, seems to be less clear about its responsibilities to the consumers than to the producers of the Arts. They define their function for the latter as striving to "improve the working conditions of artists and to preserve and enlarge their public", while asserting (1952–53) that "it is not the business of the State, working through the Arts Council, to furnish a matrix of artistic performances for a receptive and captive audience"! What role, then, *do* they envisage for the audience?

> The importance of an audience response is a variable factor. If it is a commodity which depends for its survival on the response of an audience—such as a theatre or a concert hall—it is nonsense to subsidise an activity that produces no such reaction. But it is equally wrong to measure its value solely in audience terms. Hence if a repertory theatre performs a range of relatively popular plays but fails to draw an adequate audience, it is plain it should be re-sited or change its policy, or even, as the final decision, be closed. But if the subsidy is for a poet, his recognition by a single perceptive mind can amply justify support to maintain an activity which can rarely find an adequate public. (1969–70)

The contrast between a single person's appreciation (on the one hand) and a mass audience (on the other) covers the entire spectrum of reactions. It neatly evades the question of what in fact is an "adequate" audience size. The problem is whether the Arts Council should attempt to educate public taste in esoteric art forms, or whether it should merely confine itself to catering to established tastes. The Council, of course, has it both ways.

> We ought not to waste our resources on enterprises which prove in practice to be quite unacceptable to the public. There is a level of persistent failure, in this sense, that must be regarded as definitive. Between these two extremes the Council must find the best compromise, encouraging promise wherever it is found, but not losing touch with reality. . . . Within these general conditions, the Council acknowledges a duty to foster potentially interesting experiments. (1966–67)

Basically, this is a "trade-off" problem. If the Council's basic objective is to gain *new* audiences for the Arts, it would surely be irrational to spend a large percentage of available funds on unpopular forms of art. On the other hand, if support of new artists is an overriding objective, then some of the money should be allocated to esoterica. In either case, is it not necessary to confront this issue just a little more explicitly than the Council has done in the past?

The Council is understandably sensitive to accusations of prejudice in favour of one or another form of art. It attempts to counteract these by relying exclusively on the expert opinions of the specialist panels. As Lord Goodman put it:

> We can marshal to our aid the informed judgment of expert panels, uncoerced by rules and regulations of an academic and artificial character. If the administration of subsidy is left to the tender mercies of full-time bureaucrats, my experience compels the harsh judgment that we would be better to dispense with the system altogether. (1970–71)

Perhaps true, but there would seem to be a wide spectrum of selection techniques between the existing structure of the Arts Council and the bureaucracy of a government department. To encourage more diversity is no solution, although diversity is continually emphasised as a great virtue.

> One criticism of State patronage is that it puts too much power into too few hands and thus discourages the variety and competition of styles which patrons used to foster. . . . It is not by its network of Committees and panels that the Arts Council is restrained from acting like a cultural oligarchy. The fundamental check is the Council's own conscious determination not to dictate policies or impose fashions in the arts it tries to assist. So far as it enjoys a monopoly of State patronage it is, no doubt, theoretically capable of restrictive practices in the arts. But it steadfastly avoids such practices. (1952–53)

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However, by avoiding the basic issue of selection criteria, the Council does in effect maintain "restrictive practices" in the Arts; and the arbitrary judgments of many people is not necessarily less restrictive than the rational judgment of a few. Actually, the Council's only defence of its procedures is that government departments do no better.

> If our methods are really slipshod, brash or doctrinaire, this is not because we are an independent chartered corporation . . . government departments also fall into the same failings. . . . Some people consider that a certain informality in our procedures is unbecoming seeing that the Council is entrusted with substantial sums of public money; they fear that our freedom from Parliamentary inquisition or official control in matters of policy makes us autocratic, and arbitrary in our choice of candidates for support—irresponsible in the plain as well as in the technical sense. (1962–63)

Nevertheless, while acknowledging the criticism, Lord Goodman defends the need for something like the Arts Council on the grounds that sensible decisions about the Arts are unlikely to emerge from government offices—the Council, being composed of "a body of people who breathe the fresh air of ordinary life in their normal day to day activities can—whatever mistakes we make—adjudicate on our problems with commonsense and appreciation of the needs of ordinary human beings" (1971–72).

The 11th Annual Report, however, admitted this: "The Council is not, in the limited sense, a representative body. . . . They are chosen primarily as persons with a particular knowledge of, or concern for, one or more of the fine arts" (1955–56). A study by Harris (1969) on the composition of the Arts Council would seem to question Lord Goodman's assertion.[12] Harris found that the average age at appointment to the Council was 56.7, and that Council members came in most instances from upper income and better educated families.

IT REMAINS A MATTER FOR CONJECTURE how far these facts may have influenced recent attempts to rebalance the age structure of the Council by the inclusion of "youngsters to sit on their panels", not to mention conscious attempts "*to remain contemporary and 'with it'*" (1968–69). The 22nd Annual Report queries the past pattern of spending:

> No one responsible for the disbursement of money for the improvement of standards in the arts in a country would ever claim that some of the money so spent might not, with hindsight, have been better spent in some other way. . . . The accounts for 1966–67 in this report are there to substantiate the Council's case that this money was well spent. (1966–67)

It would be interesting to see how much effect this kind of retrospective analysis will have on subsequent spending decisions. Without doubt, the Arts Council is performing a vital role, and it would be absurd to underestimate the contribution it has made to cultural activities. But without questioning whether or not the money was well spent, one might still ask whether or not it could in fact have been better spent some other way. Could it have been "more cost-effective" in terms of its own objectives?

6. Conclusion

TO EVALUATE AN ORGANISATION like the Arts Council is to assess the effectiveness of its policies in achieving stated aims. Since any aim can be achieved by a large number of policies, we must also take account of the costs of attaining a given degree of effectiveness; having decided on the most effective policy per unit of costs for each stated aim, there is the further problem of ordering the aims in terms of a scale of priorities.

But the whole exercise cannot even get started unless the social and cultural aims themselves are expressed in some clear form. It is not good enough to say that the Arts must be diffused among new audiences. How can we possibly evaluate policies to achieve that end unless we distinguish between genuinely new audiences and additional participation of old audiences, which in turn implies definite knowledge of the composition of existing audiences? This is a small example, but we have seen many others throughout this article.

The Arts Council certainly has *objectives*—but most of them are too ill-defined to make evaluation possible. Indeed, reading the Annual Reports of the Council has proved to be a depressing experience. It is not too much to say that in 26 years of official reportage they have failed to produce a single coherent and operational statement of their aims.

[12] John Harris, "Decision-makers in Government Programs of Arts Patronage: The Arts Council of Great Britain", *Western Political Quarterly* (XXII, June 1969).

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Philip Larkin: On John Betjeman—A Citation

IT IS NOT EASY *to sum up in a few minutes the achievement of a man of such celebrated and individual quality as Sir John Betjeman, and the task is made no lighter by the frivolous spanners Sir John himself has from time to time seen fit to throw into the machinery of assessment. Few distinguished writers of verse have had the modesty to describe themselves in* Who's Who *as "poet and hack." Few writers on architecture have announced as their purpose "Primarily to dissuade the average man from the belief that he knows nothing about architecture, and secondly to dissuade the average architect from continuing in his profession." Few future Royal Fine Art Commissioners have declared as their recreation "dirt track racing" (whether as spectator or competitor was not stated). One is tempted to adapt the caption of Max Beerbohm's cartoon of Matthew Arnold, and say "Uncle John, Oh why will not you be always wholly serious?"*

The question may indeed be asked. Sir John has reported to us his father's early advice:

Let what you write
Be funny, John, and be original

and seldom can parental counsel have been more faithfully followed, but there are deeper reasons why Sir John's career has at times looked like a perpetual challenge to the British public to take him seriously. Humour such as he so abundantly possesses may very properly be exercised for its own sake, but it can also serve as a kind of Trojan horse by which unpopular opinions are insinuated into the public mind, and this has been Sir John's lifelong concern. From the outset he has been resolutely opposed to current fashions in both architecture and literature. He came to maturity in the late 1920s, when modernism and the rejection of the past were in full flood, a time of which the aspirations were so plangently summarised by one of Sir John's Oxford contemporaries as

Harrow the house of the dead; look shining at
New styles of architecture, a change of heart.

Sir John was not disposed to look, shining or otherwise, at new styles of architecture, nor to change his heart. The art and literature to which his own nature most passionately responded was that of the period from the Regency to the outbreak of the First World War, and this was the aesthetic he knew it was his vocation to announce, frequently in damaging comparison with more recent productions. When he began to write and lecture, therefore, with that intuitive and astonishing erudition that has lately become so widely appreciated through the medium of television, and to suggest, for instance, that St Pancras station was a work of art, or to publish poems that mentioned neither pylons nor politics, he was tactful enough always to include an element of comedy, almost of farce, to divert his audience's attention and enable his subversion of established values to proceed unchallenged. The fact that he stands before us now not only as Poet Laureate but as an Honorary Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects demonstrates how successful this subversion has been.

SIR JOHN OPENED *his Rede Lecture in Cambridge in 1956 with the words: "I should like to try to convey to you some of my own pleasure in looking at buildings of all dates." And so he has:* English Parish Churches, English Cities and Small Towns, London's Historic Railway Stations—*for the last four decades his books, with their unique blend of imaginative sympathy, affectionate mockery and downright invective, have tried to make us see that the buildings we live and work in should be of human proportions and sanctified by human associations, not investment units of the property developer or academic stereotypes of the planning officer. Architecture, for him, is not a professional mystique. It means, as he said in 1939,*

not a house, or a single building or a church . . .
but your surroundings; not a town or a street, but
our whole over-populated island.

If we had listened to Sir John in the 1930s, it would not have been necessary for us now to invent the Department of the Environment.

"EVERY GREAT AND ORIGINAL WRITER", *as Wordsworth said, "must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished", a dictum the truth of which Sir John has demonstrated quite as ably as its author. The first poem in the first collection he published was entitled "Death in Leamington", and the title itself added a new dimension to poetry as we knew it: that of place. Just as that poem was not only about death, but death in Leamington, so the many and varied poems that have succeeded it have been not only about life, but life in England. We cannot dissociate Miss Joan Hunter Dunn from Aldershot, nor read of rural Middlesex without being aware of its past and present inhabitants in ghostly contention, and it is this that makes Sir John's* Collected Poems, *that Byronic best-seller, such a robust and vivacious portrait of England in our century.*

But this was not the only quality that made him an inevitable choice as Poet Laureate in 1972. Sir John grew up, as we all did, in the shadow of T. S. Eliot's celebrated remark, "Poets in our civilisation . . . must be difficult." Every university is familiar with the whole light industry of exegesis that has flowered from that phrase. The poems of Sir John Betjeman, however, complex without being complicated, modern without being modernist, are especially important in that they have adhered loyally to the maxim that it is the poet's business to move the reader's heart by showing his own, and in doing so have kept open a lifeline for English poetry back to Tennyson and Hardy.

SIR JOHN WON OUR ATTENTION *by being funny and original; he has won our regard, and with it almost every honour open to an English poet, by his deep affection for human beings and how they live, one rendered more poignant by an awareness of time and death. In a few lines peculiarly appropriate to this occasion, Sir John reflects on his university career (which was markedly shorter than that of the present congregation) and on the nature of wisdom. It was, he concludes,*

Not memory-tests (as I had long supposed),
Not "first-class brains" and swotting for exams,
But humble love for what we sought and knew.

It is precisely this humble love that informs Sir John's achievement, whether in poetry or architecture, and which makes him such an authoritative interpreter not only of the past but of a present that has taken him unequivocally to its heart.

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Peter Schmid

Asian Journey

Saigon, Taipeh, Tokyo

SAIGON. The mountain has given birth to a mouse. The apocalyptic Viet Nam war has produced a peace in which the guns continue to thunder as before. The journalists from all over the world who gathered in Saigon for the story of the century are whiling away their time on the terrace of the Hotel Continental in the midst of the flotsam of highly painted and equally demoralised females left on the shore by the ebb-tide of the GIs. The journalists are battering their heads against the wall of the Saigon government's resolve, against the sort of Berlin Wall of military policemen with which it has surrounded the delegations of North Viet Nam and the Vietcong to the combined Military Commission. After their Christmas disillusionment, having been led up the garden path for the second time, the journalists are departing, shrugging their shoulders—departing perhaps for ever for it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a critical reporter to penetrate the fine-spun web of visa regulations. An ambitious young cousin of the unpopular President Thieu has turned himself into a sort of super-Minister with the title of High Commissioner of Information; he makes no secret of his master's new triumphant attitude of defiance—"who is not for me is against me." What the world expected to be a break-through to new horizons is in fact the *status quo*, its severity increased by unease and further disfigured by enormous make-believe. In short it is all highly uncomfortable.

It is an armistice in which the guns refuse to keep silent. Every afternoon a self-righteous spokesman for the Saigon army announces sometimes one hundred, sometimes two hundred cases of violation by the communists; it sounds like the temperature chart of a very sick patient. The haste with which the Canadians and Indonesians despatched their teams to theatre of war now seems over-optimistic. The leisurely arrival of the Polish and Hungarian volunteers was a bit more in keeping with the situation. The calm with which both East and West, in their respective camps, disport themselves in the swimming pools left by the Americans basically only makes their powerlessness more obvious. So long as their opposite numbers of the Military Commission are unable to guarantee them a job of work, means of transport and security, these gentlemen have nothing to do but organise themselves for "the future." So long as they are unable to descend like disapproving *dei ex machina* (the *machina* being a jeep or helicopter) and separate the combatants, the "little war" will continue.

DURING A TRIP to the countryside I saw on the horizon no fewer than five helicopters in various positions peppering the rice fields with rockets. Since the Vietcong only attack by night, the operation was clearly being conducted from the government side. Perhaps it was excusable. The object is still to recapture areas that were overrun either immediately before or after the armistice, alternatively to clear blocked roads (unless it is better simply to divert traffic round the obstacle through the fields). Anyone who thinks that the armistice will bring nearer a reconciliation between the red goats and the white sheep is deceiving himself. A little while ago a sort of co-existence was in force in the jungle no-man's-land around the mountain fortress of Dalat; during the Tet offensive its commander drove off an attack with heavy losses. Now no one ventures into the countryside from the security of the town any more. "Wait for the control teams to be on the spot," people say.

PETER SCHMID, *an editor of "Die Weltwoche" (Zurich), writes regularly for* ENCOUNTER. *His most recent contribution was "Of Race, Class & I.Q." (August).*

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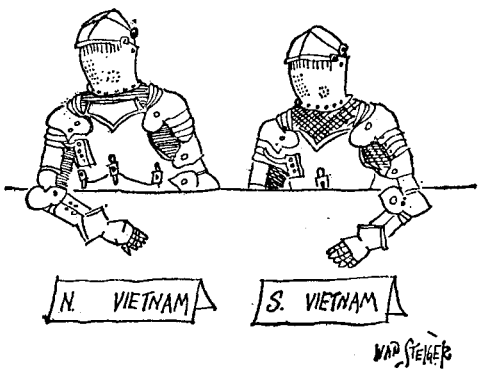
But even then—how are a mere twelve hundred men to oversee every corner of this primitive countryside? How are mere "greenhorns" to cope with these cunning native combatants? How are they to overcome the fact that they themselves are divided into two ideological blocs of equal strength, remembering that the unanimity clause condemned to impotence the old International Control Commission of 1954? Everything clearly depends on the instructions from above. A Canadian—he had been with the old ICC and has transferred into the new team—told me: "In Laos I worked with a Polish colleague who always seemed to me a model of flexibility and readiness for friendly cooperation. Until I learnt from another colleague that in Viet Nam this very same man had behaved like a real jackal, a sabotaging obstructionist. Different theatres produce different instructions from Moscow! Whether the developments of the 1950s are to be repeated, or whether the desire for *détente* on the part of the major Communist powers is sufficient to permit the control organisation to be more effective, will have to be proved by a concrete case—when we investigate an incident and have to give a judgment. . . ."

Precisely the same, of course, also applies to the fighting men themselves. If Hanoi and if the Vietcong are really taking the Paris agreements seriously, if they genuinely want to transfer the battle from the military to the political level, then on the local level the guns would quickly be silenced. On the few occasions when the press phalanx managed to shout down the resistance of the South Vietnamese military policemen the faces of the Red delegates exuded a smiling readiness to communicate. What, on the other hand, is the explanation for the difficulties between Communist prisoners and the troops due to take them over, of the sand thrown in the wheels of the first exchange? "We know that Communist logic is different from ours," said Colonel Hien, the Saigon military spokesman, shrugging his shoulders. "It is useless to rack one's brains about *why* they do something. We shall never understand. . . ."

On the other hand the Communists have equally good reason to shake their heads about their opponent Thieu. Both the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong have given their troops detailed information about the armistice provisions and ordered that they be respected. South Viet Nam's Head of State has never thought this necessary. Is it because he has assumed from the start that this suspect peace is no more than a vast Communist deception manoeuvre which sooner or later will be exposed as such? Alternatively, alarmed by the cordiality of Henry Kissinger's agreements in Hanoi and Paris, is he giving way to the age-old oriental tendency simply to banish unpleasant realities from the mind and instead proclaim some fiction as the truth?

THIS CURIOUSLY CHIMERICAL attitude of mind is in fact the explanation of the battle of flags which began long before the armistice and reached its ridiculous height about the time of the last Tet. Theoretically the agreement reads very well on this subject. In the jumble of overlapping loyalties, flags on roofs or trees signify the adherence of the area or village to one side or the other, producing a "leopard-skin" effect, a chequerboard landscape divided between Loyalists and Rebels, through which the control teams would hop around like fleas arbitrating and pronouncing judgment. Anyone driving around today inevitably feels that there must be one great endless festivity. Three red chevrons on a yellow-gold field—the emblem is to be seen on the roadside, painted on trees, on houses, on roofs, on the lintels of front doors. (Woe betide anyone who dares display the yellow star on a blue-red field which is the sign of the Vietcong!) Alternatively, the Rebel flag may be hoisted against your will by a mob of uninvited visitors as happened to the manager of a rubber plantation north of Saigon.

"I had a company of the South Vietnamese Army in my village and a detachment of Home Guard, all properly entrenched in their bunkers," he told me. "A Vietcong platoon entered unchallenged and without a shot being fired, planted their flag on the roof of the rubber factory and vanished again. In the security of his bunker the Lieutenant scratched his head. Should he send out a patrol to discover the enemy's whereabouts? No! Too risky! He called for air support over the radio. Napalm rained down on the flag and the factory. Goodbye to something worth millions and to hundreds of our jobs. . . ."



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Foreign entrepreneurs were not the only sufferers. In simple villages a Vietcong flag on some tree, protected by a remote-controlled charge, was enough to bring down a storm of bombs and shells. The Americans' model pupils have learnt their bulldozer strategy—the destruction of a locality in order to "save" it. Is this how friends are made? The Vietcong undoubtedly calculate this way. Flags are indulgent things—firing guns at them is no more intelligent than firing guns at sparrows. Ironically, as a result the strongholds of the rebellion are unmistakable even to an inexperienced foreigner driving through the country—from the well-nigh ludicrous number of Saigon flags along the roads. They flutter as a safeguard against being shot up.

WHERE DECEIT is a virtue and make-believe an actuality, what credence can one place in words? Prisoners of war, whatever their colour, are now returning home from their camps to parents, wives, and children. I found of somewhat more interest, however, the so-called "*Chieu Hois*", the deserters and converted POWs who are being unobtrusively released along with the others from their "Open-arms Centres." The Saigon camp is idyllically situated along a picturesque canal behind the zoo.

The home-comers, still in their purple POW uniforms, lean against the rickety balustrade along the bank—one of the great French mansions once stood here—and try to grasp what it means to be free. They are unprofitable subjects for questioning, dull-witted, monosyllabic youngsters who just give a surly nod of the head—yes, no, maybe . . . and so forth. Even their parrot phrases they recite rather badly. Captain Le Van Hieu, however, was more interesting to talk to. He had a sensitive, alert, and yet almost rustically guileless face. He had been a North Vietnamese battalion commander down in the delta and had deserted with two of his men when everything pointed to imminent peace. He gave me his reasons.

"They had preached to us that the oppressed and hungry people of the South would welcome us enthusiastically as liberators. When, however, I saw that people ran away from us in terror and that they had a better standard of living and more freedom than we had in the North, my mind was made up. That was months ago. I only hesitated so long out of fear." Didn't his family run the risk of reprisals? I asked. He shrugged. "Nothing much will happen to my old parents," he said. "As far as I am concerned, as an officer I was not allowed to marry. . . ." If war should break out again Hieu would not hesitate to fight against his previous tormentors.

I am more ready to believe that he has really been converted than many of the other deserters. It is an open secret that many of the gentle souls dreaming away their time along the canal are actuated, not by romantic notions but by something quite different—fear, fear of those fellow-detainees who have only ostensibly been converted and have remained Vietcong at heart and who, on liberation, will take their revenge on the really disloyal ones.

THIS PERIOD OF TWILIGHT LOYALTIES with its fanatics and its doubters is no mere present-day phenomenon. As on previous visits to Saigon, I called my old friend Le Van Dong. In 1954, as a recent deserter, he had accompanied me through the areas of central Viet Nam evacuated by the Communists. As a young student Dong had fought the French for years in the ranks of the Viet Minh. After the Geneva Agreements he had opted for the South because, as a "bourgeois intellectual," he had found Communist regimentation repellent. Now he was just back from Paris where, as he admitted to me, he had kept in close touch with the Hanoi delegation.

"They are fabulous, this young generation which has been recruited by the Communists," he enthused, "brilliant, committed, genuine patriots who by their own efforts have beaten the greatest military machine in the world. . . ."

Here in the South no intellectual can suppress his feeling of pride over the achievements of his Vietnamese brothers; equally he cannot suppress a feeling of shame at a demoralised society, a dollar satellite, occupied only in filling the pockets of a small band of profiteers. But was Dong not himself a member of this *dolce vita* society of the South? He admired Hanoi, but was he not happier living in Paris? Not really, for he was always being attracted by the spell of the Sparta in the North. If the present-day rigidity of the fronts diminishes and individual contacts across them compel people to reflect, on both sides the so-called "era of the doubters and deserters" will undoubtedly dawn. In this conflict of loyalties which of the two will ultimately triumph—Hieu's longing for Freedom or Dong's yearning for Commitment?

A Saigon historian said to me: "If you present this alternative to the ordinary man in the street or the peasant in the delta—and the ultimate decision depends on them—you will always get the same answer. The Hanoi government is generally considered better and cleaner. People admire it. But they prefer to live under the government of the South because, in the private sector, it guarantees them a greater measure of liberty and well-being. Discipline may be impressive, but no one submits to it willingly. If our fate is to be decided not by bullets but by ballots, then Hanoi cannot win. . . ."

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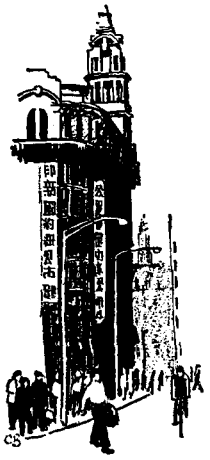

TAIPEH. It seems presumptuous. On her birthday "*Madame*" held an exhibition—not untalented amateur drawings of bamboo plants in Taipeh's National Museum among the great masters of the previous century. Whole classes of uniformed (and numbered) schoolgirls devoutly lay before them their little posies of chives arranged in the best formalistic manner. Obviously the "cult of personality" is not confined to Mao's Empire of the Little Red Book. President Chiang Kai-shek, commenting on his versatile wife's artistic hobby, described her drawings as "better than the great master Sch' Tao." For him her work has even a political implication, for "the bamboo is a symbol of nobility and probity." Legend has it that the bamboo was the sole nourishment of the phoenix. Evidently Madame's gifted paint-brush depicts bamboo plants so realistically that they appear to herald the resurrection of a whole host of phoenixes and with them a future period of Chinese happiness and prosperity.

A few facts, however, to counter such exaggerated aesthetic optimism. Last year Taiwan was expelled from UNO. Even its name was expunged from the publications of the world assembly (it now figures merely as "a province of China"). President Nixon's visit to Peking and the exchange of "liaison officials" between Washington and Peking lead one to suspect that, in their efforts to reach détente with China, the Americans have concluded secret agreements which would give Taiwan's rulers shivers of uncertainty provided that they are still thinking clearly.

How far this applies to the aged Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek is as great a secret for his subjects as the content of the private Kissinger-Chou En-lai talks. Last year there were rumours of a throat operation and a lung infection, all discounted by Madame with devious statements about "full recovery."

The persistent absence of any ceremonial occasions finally gave rise to what is called here a "compromise rumour." Physically the old gentleman was still leading some form of existence but mentally he was floating in the clouds. In the whole world there is only *one* other place where so much depends on the life or death of a single individual—and that is Peking. In all the recent American pronouncements, as people here ruminate, there was invariably a reference to Washington's debt of honour to the Generalissimo, the "Gimo." But there was never a word about the democratic interests of the Taiwan people. Does this mean that after the Gimo's departure—so sorry!—the great sell-out will come?

FORMOSA HAS SEEN many foreign masters since Portuguese sailors landed there in the 16th century and then lost their prize to the Dutch. Although over the course of three centuries the island was peopled by immigrants from the mainland, their sense of Chinese nationality became so diluted that, when bartered to the Japanese as war booty at the end of the last century, the people of Taiwan accepted Japanese rule with a shrug of the shoulders. After World War II they rejoined their victorious Chinese fatherland with mixed feelings. Ruthlessly plundered by officials and *Kuomintang* soldiery, in 1947 they rose against Chinese rule and were bloodily and cruelly mown down. In 1949 when Chiang Kai-shek's mainland troops were overrun by the Communists and the remnants fled to the island, Taipeh attained the doubtful and expensive honour of being simultaneously a provincial capital and the capital of the "Central Empire." The 15 million islanders had to support the top-heavy superstructure of an ageing bureaucracy and to carry the financial burden of a vast army whose generals dreamed of reconquering the mainland—quixotic dreams on the part of an unwanted élite of rulers who were only temporary lodgers with little commitment to the interests of the indigenous majority (85%).

Year by year the anti-communist counter-revolution, the sole justification for the existence of this régime, looked more threadbare. When finally the diplomatic dance of death reached its height with Washington's and Tokyo's *renversement des alliances* involving the betrayal of best friends, there seemed to be only two alternatives open. Maintain to the bitter end the theory of One China, admit that the Communists had won on points, offer a sporting handshake and reach some arrangement with them. Or mend the fences with the Taiwan majority whose leaders had so far been condemned to silence or bribed to collaborate, and together with them proclaim the independence of the island. ("We have always been urging this on Chiang," a senior American official admitted to me; "six years ago it would still have gone smoothly but today it is too late. . . .") Is this small defenceless people, who have never been allowed to decide their own fate, to be subjected once more to some unwelcome destiny by a stroke of Great Power pens at some far-off conference table? Is this to happen, yet

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again, without these people being able to say a word, without them even knowing what is going on?

There is only speculation and rumour—that, for instance Chiang Ching-kuo (the *Gimo*'s son brought up in Moscow, master of the secret police and the army, last year raised to the status of omnipotent Prime Minister as the heir to his father's power) is already in secret negotiation with Peking. Of course it is furiously denied. From the other side too the trumpet is giving mysterious sounds. At the end of February Peking ostentatiously celebrated the anniversary of the 1947 rising, the memory of which still poisons the relationship between the Chiangs and their subjects. The old martial noises about "liberation" were pitched in a noticeably minor key. An ostentatious welcome was accorded to the representatives of the autonomist democratic Independence League. Fu Dsuo-yi, a Civil War general who had deserted Chiang for the communists, urged his ex-colleagues to do likewise.[1] The Peking newspaper *Red Flag* assured Taiwan's capitalists that the communists would appreciate the continued value of their expertise in running Formosa's enterprises. The peasants were assured that they had no need to fear forced collectivisation. In short, the Eastern sense of history, which embraces centuries not puny little years, has clearly consigned the military conquest of Taiwan to limbo and is aiming at a gradual peaceful absorption of the renegade province.

But would it be so surprising if the game developed in precisely the opposite direction? On the *Gimo*'s death his successor in Taiwan would certainly be his son. The Nationalist spies still operating on the mainland, however, report astonishing developments. The interplay between opposing forces in the army, the party and the administration (as I was told) has resulted in that state of immobility in political life which history associates with the dissolution of an old dynasty and the rise of a new one. Chou En-lai's foreign policy activities should not blind one to the critical internal position. Foreign policy is to some extent a thing apart as far as the power-struggle over Mao's succession is concerned; the most fantastic options are still open. Admittedly these enlightened anti-communists are apt to whisper to you that no one on Taiwan is seriously thinking of "the reconquest of the mainland" any more, however much may be said about it officially. In the light of the uncertain power position on the mainland, the pessimism with which the West writes off Taiwan may well be, to say the least, premature. The American diplomat I have already quoted agreed. "The most important thing today is to gain time," he said. "We do not know what the Chinese future holds; we only know that highly dramatic changes are in the offing. . . ." "But whatever happens these surely could not include a restoration of the *ancien régime*?" I countered. He shrugged his shoulders.

I MUST ADMIT that I did not feel quite happy about my use of the term *"ancien régime"*. Though the rule of the Kuomintang police-state is by no means democratic, after the 1947 holocaust it did atone for the sins of its corrupt beginners by installing an unusually efficient, reformist and, by "oriental standards," comparatively clean administration. The mainlanders were, accordingly, able to make a virtue of their shortcomings (*i.e.* that they were "foreigners"). Without harming their own "kith and kin" they were able to dispossess the indigenous landowners and distribute their land to the island's farmers. In the process they had no need to exterminate the owners as the communists did; they could compensate them with shares in confiscated pre-War Japanese industries. In this way, all at the expense of someone else, the foundations were laid for a rather healthy capitalist prosperity which is only surpassed in Asia today by the new Japan. The people of Taiwan are able to look upon their indigent mainland brothers from veritable peaks of economic statistics. The exports of this small people of 15 million (exports consist primarily of industrial products from textiles to super-tankers) are greater by 500 million dollars than those of the 750 million Red Chinese. The annual income per head ($470) is four times as great. They consume 2680 calories per day as against a mere 1780. And all this apart from the cars (and Hondas) which race across the island on modern expressways.

Taiwan's problem is no longer that of poverty but, like Japan, that of export surpluses which have become indigestibly high. Love, including political affection, is said to spring from the stomach. Under such circumstances who but homesick romanticists or ideological fanatics could wish for "union with Peking"?

WHAT ABOUT local patriotic autonomism? It seems to flourish but it is so clandestine that the leaders of the Underground are unknown even to

[1] Fu Dsuo-Yi's appeal read: "We are all Chinese. Why can we not discuss with each other the sacred subject of unification of the fatherland? . . . Let us get together and talk: the quicker the better. If you cannot engage in formal talks at once, then send a few people to the mainland, either openly or in secret, so that they can look around and visit friends. You can be quite sure that the government will keep the matter secret. The government keeps its word, and it guarantees that you can come and go in freedom and security."

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most of the resident journalists. This is understandable, for the consequence of detection is either years of hard labour for "treason", or mysterious disappearance.

Dr *X*, a medical practitioner, received me as a simulated patient on the recommendation of a mutual friend. He belongs to that middle generation of Taiwanese who passed through the Japanese schools, and he regards the old colonialists with a more sympathetic eye than the so-called liberators from the mainland. "They are entirely different from us in their whole thinking and behaviour," he emphasises; "it is visible at a glance, even with youngsters." Even if the Chinese do only slowly assimilate, when it comes to jobs they manage to obtain from the authorities all the posts of importance and influence—in the Army, in the Secret Police, in the Party, in the Ministries of Finance, Trade and Education—everywhere Mainlanders (or their offspring) are to be found in key positions. Any criticism of this situation is immediately labelled "subversive" and punished according to the rules of the anti-communist campaign. "Whenever eight Taiwanese gather together, there is one police spy . . ." as the saying goes. As a result, said Dr *X*, shrugging his shoulders, the autonomist resistance movement in the island is practically dead and its voice can only be heard among the exiles. It is impossible to communicate with the distant leaders even by post, and if a personal emissary from them arrives it is wise only to confide in him if he can give an agreed secret sign. But, Dr *X* admits, the new political situation has taken the wind out of the conspiracy's sails even more effectively than the police terror. There is no point in fighting the devil one know if, as a result, one plays into the hands of the communist Beelzebub,

"Today the decision is no longer a political one", he told me. "After the first panic and shock our economy is now booming. Our claim to independent existence—our power, if one may use the word—today depends upon our prosperity. As long as we concentrate on that, the world takes us seriously. . . ."

IN THIS PHASE of pragmatic rethinking the moderate autonomists, who have been working for years for compromise and cooperation with the Chiang régime, are being proved right. The most adroit and courageous of these is Henry Kao whom I first met in 1955 when he was the oppositionist burgomaster of Taipeh. I met him again in the 1960s when he was in disfavour and under surveillance. Today he is Minister of Communications. One of the first official acts of Chiang Ching-kuo, the new premier, was to give six seats in his eighteen-man cabinet to native Taiwanese. Admittedly they still have not a single post of importance and most of these fledgling dignitaries are "opportunists" who have made a career for themselves in the *Kuomintang* by acting as voluntary advertisements for the régime for years. Henry Kao, however, trained as an engineer in America, is of a different ilk; he is an expert tight-rope walker between collaboration and fearless critical opposition. "I have accepted my post as a Minister," he says, "because my presence in the cabinet hoists a signal to our people—Look, they can no longer do without us! . . . It's a beginning, our first break-through and it will go on uninterruptedly until we have genuine democratic co-determination. . . ."

The fact that Chiang Ching-kuo, the anti-communist who was brought up in Moscow, is not only feeling out his Peking adversary but also stretching out a hand to the Taiwanese Nationalists suggests—as a Chinese tale has it—that the sly fox always keeps all his options open. Taiwan's fate is still undecided.

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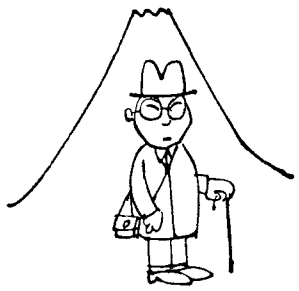

TOKYO. Whether in the museum, in the night-club, or on the promenade, they look like a squad of recruits on the parade-ground. Admittedly they are led, not by some grim corporal but by a smartly dressed hostess with a whistle hung round her neck and a pennant covered with decorative lettering in her hand. Behind her trot some dozen middle-aged men who stop and gawk when their bear-leader stops and listen patiently to what she had to tell them in her melodious Japanese tones. Today this scenario is to be seen (and I have seen it) throughout Asia down to Singapore and Bali. The Japanese tourist flood arrives like a plague of locusts. Until a few years ago they were happy with their own home pastures, but this is a sign of the strength of the yen *vis-à-vis* neighbouring countries. It is a sort of follow-up to the open-handed American visitors who, with their shrinking dollars, are increasingly being reduced to the status of second-class tight-fisted outsiders.

Even in Taiwan or Hong Kong the experienced eye can easily pick out the Japanese faces from among the slit-eyed multitude; discipline has

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imparted to their countenances sterner stiffer lines than those of the more flexible Chinese or Malayans. Many of them have not even the superficial "Western" polish of Tokyo. Their weather-beaten faces and stolid docility mark them as provincials—peasants who, in this era of growing industrialisation, have made billions of yen overnight by selling their land and have been lured into a world adventure in herds by smart travel agencies. The other Asiatics watch this invasion with mixed feelings. On the one hand a lucrative tourist trade is always welcome. On the other hand, the flags, the whistles, and the regimentation awaken sinister memories among the older and middle generations, memories of the bad years of World War II when Nippon's imperial armies flooded across South-east Asia as the champions of anti-white anti-colonialism and in fact subjected the "liberated" peoples to a rule of iron severity and sometimes almost sadistic cruelty far more humiliating than anything they had ever experienced at the hands of their Western masters.

It is a truism to say that domination is exerted and maintained today not by force of arms but by economic superiority. Japan is the shining example of this: her enforced disarmament after her defeat allowed her to devote all her resources to industrial expansion and, protected by the American nuclear umbrella, to outstrip all her rivals, almost including even her protector. The "Co-Prosperity Sphere", which Japan sought unsuccessfully to establish through the might of her bayonets, has materialised today through exports and investments. The generals of the new imperialism are not sabre-swinging Samurai but smiling commercial travellers and technical experts. The trade figures read like operational reports, no matter whether the enemy's defeat is expressed in numbers of casualties or of import percentages. 45% of Taiwan's imports and 41.5% of South Korea's—41.6% of the Philippines', 34.6% of Thailand's, and 25.8% of Indonesia's—are "*made in Japan*". In the reverse direction only a thin trickle of exports flows from these countries to Japan. Any surpluses achieved by these countries through trade with third parties (or as a result of American aid) are sucked into the bottomless Japanese pit. If they try to raise their production capacity (and so reduce their adverse trade balance) again credits and machinery mostly come from Japan; and so, as the bird in the net only entangles itself further with its desperate fluttering, every effort they make merely drags them deeper into economic dependence.

Even if the devaluation of the Dollar and the floating of the Yen have improved the prospect of reducing Japanese predominance by switching to American products, that predominance is already a well-nigh inexorable fact. It is not merely the Japanese tourist who is in process of replacing the dollar Croesus. The negative aspect is increasingly coming to the fore—that of the calculating imperialist exploiter. The fact that the "ugly Japs" are themselves Asians does not excuse them—rather the reverse. *Quod licet Jovi non licet bovi.* Things were accepted from the Westerners as a matter of course; their culture was different and one had become used to them over the centuries. Such things are not tolerated from the Asiatic brother whose culture is felt somehow to be similar—particularly when, with the upstart's high-handedness, he repeats all the beginner's mistakes which the others have long since outgrown.

THE TOURIST, ostensibly so profitable a proposition, is the originator of this image of the ruthless egoist. "In fact we get nothing from them" was the indignant comment of one of the Thailand students who with their boycott demonstrations last December registered the first protests of the neo-colonised peoples. "They fly in on a Japanese airline and are lodged in a Japanese-owned hotel by a Japanese travel agency. They tour with a Japanese guide in a Japanese bus. They buy in Japanese souvenir shops or Japanese stores, and they never say a word to any of the despised natives. Throughout their entire holiday they have only left Japan geographically!" Though much in this complaint is true the Thai student was perhaps doing the visitors an injustice. What looks like egocentric arrogance is frequently exactly the opposite—the helplessness of the non-linguist, the insecurity of the nervous foreigner who clings to the society he knows, to the apron-strings of the hostess he trusts; similarly, the notorious "arrogance" of the Japanese (especially when under the influence of drink) was basically only a manifestation of a notorious inferiority complex.

ATTEMPTS TO MAKE excuses are no good, however, when from Bangkok to Singapore protests are to be heard today against "unfair trading methods"—when the protests come not merely from excitable students but from five hundred business firms which sent an official memorandum to their government drawing attention to "intolerable chicaneries" on the part of their Japanese partners.

The Chinese are well known for the fact that, though extremely astute in negotiation, once they have given their word they adhere to it strictly even without a written contract. But the honest old-school Chinese is left speechless when

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Japanese firms attempt to supply customers direct, behind the backs of their local agents, when they enter into collusion with their competitors the moment they have concluded a contract. The Japanese play such tricks not merely on a small scale with private firms but with governments, and on the highest level.

One of the most blatant examples of this is a plastics industry which the Thai Investment Bureau was trying to put on its feet. A number of European and American companies made offers; but they were so vastly underbid by their Japanese competitor that they withdrew, shrugging their shoulders. At once there was a suspicious change in the attitude of the Japanese. They began to prolong their "project studies" by the despatch of innumerable commissions; they grumbled about technical profitability and about the prices agreed. Finally, the Thais realised what they were up to: the longer local factories remained unbuilt, the more could Japanese industry continue to monopolise—up to 90%—the Thai market with its finished products. When (allegedly by 1981) their snails-pace construction of the local industry was completed (at a considerably increased cost in view of the world-wide increase in building prices), the planned production was likely to be considerably in excess of requirements, and so Japan could continue to export her finished products.

A MONSTER, thinking of its own profit and nothing else—that is the picture of the "nasty Japanese" in the minds of the dependent neighbouring peoples. When one hears the local nationalists cursing the "new imperialists", one cannot repress a wry smile. Their complaints are precisely those made against the British, the French, the Dutch, and the Portuguese in the ex-colonial Third World and against the USA (though they have long since ceased to be true) in Latin America. Foreign capital, they say, squeezes local business out instead of promoting it; the native experts and craftsmen are never allowed to reach senior positions. "On the contrary," say the Japanese; any partner and any employee who can meet our comparatively high standards is welcomed "with open arms."

Such partners are to be found mostly among the Chinese who are as industrious and active as the Japanese—not among the indolent tropical dreamers, the natives of South-east Asia. This is the well-known racial complaint of the old colonialists—is there anything new under the sun?

Imperceptibly this mistrust of the "coloured peoples" is leaving its mark on Tokyo's foreign trade and foreign policy. Should a sense of "Asiatic solidarity" lead Japan to take from American shoulders the burden, now so heavy, of development in these sub-tropical regions (as Washington is urging her to do)? She will only do so most unwillingly; or insofar as aid will increase her trade prospects, or her own strategic security (the umbilical cord to the Persian Gulf oil wells necessarily passes through the straits held by these "backward" South-east Asians).

JAPAN HAS LONG SINCE ceased to feel herself an Asiatic nation. As a world power she is stretching out her tentacles towards raw materials and markets all over the world. On the other hand, however, the Japanese still feel happiest with partners of their "own sort", and this explains their preference for investments in Taiwan and Seoul. This might be the deciding factor in the choice which Tokyo can and must make today between cooperation with Peking (opening up the fabulous prospect of the Chinese mainland market) and the development possibilities in Siberia (which entail wooing Moscow). The Japanese will undoubtedly try to get the best of both worlds. From the overall balance-of-power point of view it is fortunate that firm commitment in either direction does not appear attractive—neither a Tokyo–Moscow Axis as the answer to the Washington–Peking agreement, nor the formation of a Chinese–Japanese East Asian super-power which gives some of the more imaginative geo-politicians the shudders. The solution to the dilemma may lie in friendship with both great powers, hostile to each other though they are. Politics and trade do not necessarily have to follow the same paths; the left hand does not necessarily have to get agitated about what the right hand is doing.

South-east Asia's statesmen, who have been reduced to mere marionettes actuated by stronger, faceless forces, are naturally by no means enthusiastic over Japan's cynical *realpolitik*. With some justification they fear that the opening up of China will absorb a large part of those funds upon which they were counting for their own development and so merely intensify further their present state of dependence. But I have listened to their warnings. They prophesy that the Japanese will reap the due reward of their "treachery."

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M. M. Mahood

Amritsar to Chandrapore

E. M. Forster & the Massacre

LIFE FOR EDWARDIAN INTELLECTUALS was amazingly free of what Leonard Woolf called the horrible urgency of politics. One event alone, according to Woolf, captured their imagination.

> Over the body and fate of one obscure, Jewish captain in the French army, a kind of cosmic conflict went on year after year between the establishment of Church, Army and State on the one side and the small band of intellectuals who fought for truth, reason and justice on the other.

E. M. Forster's most political novel was also to centre upon a trial in which a man narrowly escapes being wrongfully convicted as the result of racial prejudice. But its setting was not France but India; and what was going on in Britain's overseas possessions was of no more concern to the average, well-educated member of the English middle classes in the first quarter of this century than Peter Walsh's Eastern life was of concern to Clarissa Dalloway. Nothing demonstrates this unconcern more strikingly than the deafening silence with which English intellectuals in 1919 and 1920 greeted what Forster called the public infamy of Amritsar.

Events in India at the time require perhaps a brief recapitulation. The constitutional reforms initiated by the Montagu Declaration of August, 1917, had done little to meet popular political demands. After the Armistice the Raj, alarmed at what it considered "revolutionary" crimes, sought to perpetuate its wartime curbs on civil rights by the notorious Rowlatt Acts, which were passed early in 1919. Gandhi met this new move of the Raj with his own innovation, *Satyagraha*, or civil disobedience. A *hartal* organised for 10 April passed off for the most part without violence. But when Gandhi was prevented from entering the Punjab, riots broke out in several towns of the province. In Amritsar, where the *hartal* had been uneventful, the arrest of two pro-Gandhi doctors on the 10th gave rise to serious rioting, in which five European men were killed. General Dyer took over control of the town which remained quiet for the next two days. Then on the 13th a large crowd gathered in the public space known as the Jallianwala Bagh. Dyer arrived with a column mainly of Gurkhas whom he ordered to open fire. When they withdrew they left 379 men and boys dead or dying, and an uncalculated number of wounded.

For those who believed that Dyer's action put an end to an incipient revolt, this was the Amritsar Affair. Others, appalled by the facts that many people in the square had not heard the proclamation against assemblies (some had merely come to town for a religious festival), that no warning to disperse was given, that escape from the square was almost impossible, and that the firing continued for ten minutes, called it the Amritsar Massacre. The Hunter Committee, appointed six months later to look into the Punjab disorders, censured Dyer's action, and its censure was upheld by the Secretary of State for India. But Dyer had his impassioned defenders in the Commons, and the Lords passed a motion deploring the censure. Public sympathy for Dyer ran high; a consolatory fund was opened and quickly reached £28,000.

Forster's Wilcoxes probably contributed generously; but what were the Schlegels doing? Official censorship has been blamed for their silence. Certainly before the Hunter Committee report in May 1920, few details of the rising reached English newspapers. Yet *The Times* of 19 April 1919 carried a report that "At Amritsar, on April 13, the mob defied the proclamation forbidding public meetings. Firing ensued, and 200 casualties occurred." And the day's leading article referred to the shootings, though in the belief that they were directed against an open revolt. Even though the figure of those killed was short of the facts, it was a good deal in excess of, say, the number killed on a comparable occasion forty years later at Sharpeville. One has to conclude that in 1919 even the most sensitive and scrupulous readers of *The Times* paid scant attention to what was being done in their name in the Punjab.

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E. M. Forster was an honourable exception to this general indifference. Thanks to his many Indian contacts and his recent experience in Egypt of how race relations could be damaged by the abuse of power, he was well aware of the significance of the massacre. His friend Malcolm Darling, a liberal-minded administrator, was actually in the Punjab at the time; and in the novel, Fielding, half-in and half-out of white officialdom, has a name which portmanteaus "Darling" and "Forster." Though Forster's published writings contain only one reference to the massacre, *A Passage to India*, begun in 1913 but recast and completed after Forster's 1921 visit, abounds in echoes of the Punjab troubles.

THE CHANDRAPORE AFFAIR, like the Amritsar one, takes place at the hottest time of year, when the disturbances to be expected at a current religious festival have rendered the European community edgy. Trouble starts with the arrest of a local doctor, as it had begun in Amritsar with the arrest of two doctors. Before Aziz's trial, the Sweepers—Gandhi's Untouchables—go on strike. From the Civil Lines, a *hartal* was indistinguishable from a strike, and assuming this viewpoint Forster at one stage wrote: "Sweepers were acquiring racial solidarity. Something was behind the people, some new and insolent force." Fielding's support for Aziz earns for him the sort of disapproval lavished by the real "Anglo-Indians" of the time upon B. G. Horniman, a close associate of Gandhi, who wrote the first independent account of the Amritsar troubles, which Forster could have read in 1921. Horniman was the editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, and in the manuscript of the novel Fielding, faced with unemployment, considers journalism as a possible means to his staying on in India.

Most interesting of all the parallels is that between Adela Quested's situation in the book and that of Marcella Sherwood in real life. (Again names are significant. Adela acquired her unusual first name at a late stage in the book's composition.) Miss Sherwood was a missionary teacher at Amritsar and so, like Adela, only on the fringe of English official society. In the disturbances of 10 April she was set upon by the mob and left for dead. The excessive collapse of Adela Quested, so surprising for a tough "advanced" young woman, is perhaps the awkward result of Forster's attempt to reproduce a situation, like Miss Sherwood's, which would give rise to a hysterical desire for revenge on the part of the white community. Their emotions fanned by rumours that Adela's life is in the balance, members of the Chandrapore Club regret (to quote another manuscript passage) "the good old days . . . when an Englishman who was wronged could go out and shoot right and left until his honour felt satisfied and no questions be asked afterwards." General Dyer's extreme emotional response to the attack on Miss Sherwood, and the influence on his behaviour in the Jallianwalla Bagh of his apprehensions about the white women in Amritsar, came out clearly at the enquiry. The infamous "crawling order" enforced in the street where Miss Sherwood had been attacked finds an echo in Mrs Turton's outburst: "Why, they ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishwoman's in sight"; while English popular reactions to Dyer's disgrace were very much in accord with the cry of an unnamed character at the courthouse: "There's not such a thing as cruelty after a thing like this."

The one person who seems to have retained a sane view of the incident was Miss Sherwood herself. In spite of the fact that she had been subject to very real injury, she behaved with the generosity and regard for the truth that mark Adela's conduct, once her echo has been exorcised. She refused government compensation for her injuries. In December 1919 she wrote a letter to *The Times* in which she pointed out that she owed her survival to her rescue by parents of her Indian pupils. She also put right some misreporting of an attack on a hospital similar to the one Forster makes the culminating point of the riot in *A Passage to India*: "A mob went to the Zenana Mission Hospital also with intent to burn it, but was harangued by Hindu and Mahomedan neighbours, and desisted." This incident becomes the clowning of Dr Panna Lal and the speech-making of the Nawab outside the Minto Hospital; in themselves an indication of the serio-comic handling of civic disorders in the novel.

> The Marabar Caves had been a terrible strain on the local administration; they altered a good many lives and wrecked several careers, but they did not break up a continent or even dislocate a district.

The troops, to the disappointment of the very stupid subaltern, are not called out, and Dr Aziz does not suffer the fate so many suffered in the Punjab, transportation to the Andaman Islands. In the manuscript there is one victim of the riot following the trial—"a punkah wallah"—but Forster wisely dropped this notion. The irony was too neat, and even one "real" casualty would have robbed the Chandrapore affair of its triviality.

Trivial as it is in itself, the Chandrapore affair has intangible but deeply serious consequences. Even before the end of the Caves section of the book the Indians have closed ranks in a Hindu-Muslim entente, and their attitude to the British

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has hardened. The Nawab Bahadur gives up his Imperial title. Hamidullah, whose agreeable good sense in the first part of the book suggests that he was modelled on Forster's friend Syed Ross Masood, now turns on Ronny and Adela with savage contempt. Aziz, though "without natural affection for the land of his birth", becomes a nationalist and plans to leave British India. These are exactly the ways Indian intellectuals reacted to the massacre and its aftermath. Dyer's exoneration at the hands of the Lords caused Rabindranath Tagore to write home to India:

> The unashamed condonation of brutality expressed in their speeches and echoed in their newspapers is ugly in its frightfulness. . . . The late events have conclusively proved that our true salvation lies in our own hands.

He himself returned his knighthood to the Palace. Jawaharlal Nehru, who had hitherto kept aloof from Congress, found himself shortly after the massacre in a railway carriage with a group of British officers who were jubilant over Dyer's action. From that day on he threw in his lot with Congress. The years that followed were a time of close Muslim-Hindu accord within the Congress party. This political hardening and withdrawal was very evident to Forster when he returned to India in 1921; the title of an article he then wrote for *The Nation*, "Too Late", is repeated in the closing chapter of the novel: "Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons. We wanted to know you ten years back—now it's too late."

WHEN FORSTER began his Indian novel after his pre-war visit, he did not know quite what crisis was to centre round the Marabar Caves. Details of the Amritsar massacre helped to give that crisis its ultimate form. But does this linking of fact with fiction in any way contribute to our understanding and evaluation of *A Passage to India* as a novel? In defiance of a strict formalism, I would maintain that it does. It can help us to decide between the view that the tragicomedy of race contacts bears scant relationship to the "other world" explored by Mrs Moore and Professor Godbole, and the contrary view held by Lowes Dickinson that it is indeed a novel in which the surface is in touch with the depths:

> Whereas in your other books your kind of double vision squints—this world, and a world or worlds behind—here it all comes together.

The case of *Rex v. Aziz* gives us a good opportunity to look at this relationship of surface and depths. Mr Das refuses to listen to speculations about the evidence that might have been given by the elder of the two ladies who visited the Marabar Caves.

> "An extraneous element is being introduced into the case", said the Magistrate. "I must repeat that as a witness Mrs Moore does not exist. Neither you, Mr Amritrao, nor Mr McBryde, you, have any right to surmise what that lady would have said. She is not here, and consequently she can say nothing."

Mr Das is emphatic because he is upholding a principle of justice which the Turtons and Burtons had recently put into jeopardy. The second Rowlatt Act allowed courts (I quote Horniman's summary) "to accept in evidence, in certain circumstances, the recorded statements of persons dead or missing or otherwise incapable of giving evidence, without [their] having been subject to the test of cross-examination". In the storm of protest roused by this and other provisions of the Act (never, in the event, enforced) Indians repeatedly invoked the rational principles of earlier British rule against the prejudices of the newer imperialism. It was the same kind of confrontation as had taken place in the 1880s when the Ilbert Act, allowing Indians to try cases involving Europeans, aroused bitter resentment among the English community; and this too is echoed in the novel when the ladies of Chandrapore sent a telegram to the Lieutenant Governor's wife protesting against Das presiding over the trial. Ronny Heaslop cannot quite approve of this move, because he likes to think that his old Das is all right. So, in a rather different sense from Ronny's, he is; and never more so than when he here rejects the distortion of the judicial process implicit in the second Rowlatt Act.

But in another sense, Mr Das is all wrong. It is true Mrs Moore is not "there"; she has left India and, we subsequently discover, she has been buried at sea. But absence, as Professor Godbole has already insisted, implies presence: "absence is not non-existence, and we are therefore entitled to repeat, 'Come, come, come, come'." When Mahmoud Ali's hysteria causes Mrs Moore's name to "burst on the court like a whirlwind", the crowd outside takes up the "invocation" with its rhythmic chants of *Essmiss Essmoor*. Then, in the silence of the whirlwind, the still small voice of truth speaks through Adela, as the delusion of her prepared "information" yields to her vision of the picnic *sub specie aeternitatis*. She withdraws the charge, and Aziz is saved. Mrs Moore has given her evidence.

There is no shying away from this being, if not an actual miracle, at least an intrusion of the numinous. For a miracle is needed to save Aziz; the fair-mindedness, rectitude, intelligence and moral courage of Mr Das do not suffice against the terrible persistence of Adela's echo. Already when he had visited India in 1912 to 1913, Forster had felt how frail were the arches of good race relations raised against the oppressive

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Indian sky. Things had been easier in the days of the Nabobs, of Macaulay, of the Aryan Samaj, but since the 'eighties officials like McBryde—the best of a bad bunch in the novel—had taken the Mutiny records for their Bible, rather than the Bhagavad Gita. And in 1919 Forster felt the powerlessness of the liberal virtues in the face of an escalation of violence such as occurred at Amritsar. The arrests of two doctors led to five European deaths and a brutal attack on Miss Sherwood; these in their turn led to nearly four hundred Indian deaths. So in *A Passage to India* the paper tigers of Mohurram generate a fear that gives scope to the callousness of Callendar, which unleashes a savagery in the crowd—"the spirit of evil again strode abroad". At the end of the Caves section, Fielding reflects sombrely among the broken arches of destroyed friendships:

> "It is no good," he thought, as he returned past the mosque, "we all build upon sand; and the more modern the country gets, the worse'll be the crash. In the old eighteenth century, when cruelty and injustice raged, an invisible power repaired their ravages. Everything echoes now; there's no stopping the echo. The original sound may be harmless, but the echo is always evil." This reflection about an echo lay at the verge of Fielding's mind. He could never develop it. It belonged to the universe that he had missed or rejected. And the mosque missed it too. Like himself, those shallow arcades provided but a limited asylum.

The universe to which Fielding and Aziz belong is the world of moral and aesthetic discriminations. Official responsibilities compel discrimination: Fielding, by virtue of his position as Principal, has to find out if the Russell's Viper was brought into the college by a student, just as Ronny, early in the novel, has to find out if a Pathan has committed rape. And because of this commonsense recognition that there are human agents of evil, Fielding—to the rage of Hamidullah—inclines to blame the guide for the assault on Adela. Aziz, for his passionate part, has to invent enemies ("a black cobra, very venomous") to reinforce his friendships. His possessiveness of Fielding is exclusive. Fielding must not be kind to the "treacherous harridan" Adela, if he is to remain Aziz's friend. "We must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing."

MRS MOORE, who lives in the other universe, that of the religious consciousness, is indeed left for a time with nothing, but she knows that this kind of evil, a vision of a world from which God is absent, is less deadly than the echo which stimulates Adela's racial fear and makes her see Aziz as evil personified. In 1919, Forster was pondering the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists for whom the good was not something to be carved out of life by discrimination, but a transforming vision whereby a world from which God had appeared to be absent became filled with his presence. At the time that the reverberations of the Amritsar disaster confronted him with meaningless, gratuitous evil (in the way that Hiroshima and Belsen did a later generation) he may have remembered the reactions of his fellow-traveller in 1912, Lowes Dickinson, to Hindu mysticism:

> Is this all comprehensive Hinduism, this universal toleration, this refusal to recognise ultimate antagonisms, this "mush" in a word, as my friends would dub it—is this, after all, the truest and profoundest vision?

So in the "Caves" section Fielding, for whom a mystery is a muddle, is exasperated by Godbole's "mush"—"When evil occurs it expresses the whole of the universe. Similarly when good occurs"—yet is driven, at the end of his spiritual tether, to acknowledge that the muddle may after all be a mystery; a transforming and sacramental vision remains possible.

Thus it came about that the philosophical thought of the Maharajah of Dewas State Senior and the Gokul Ashtami ceremony in which Forster in 1921 participated as the Maharajah's Private Secretary supplied the completion of the book's design through the "Temple" section. Godbole's moment of illumination evokes afresh the presence of Esmiss Esmoor to heal, though only for a time, the rifts made by the Marabar Caves affair. As a counterpoise to the desolation of the Caves section, the Maharajah's quirky philosophy was rather lightweight, and if anywhere a scrap of justification could be found for Forster's misgiving, "This is a failure", it would lie here. If only Forster's Anglo-Indian and Indian friends at the time had not regarded Gandhi as a bogeyman, Forster might have discovered in Gandhi's thought an essentially Indian way of overcoming the echo; and his dismissal of nationalist sentiment might have been less facile. But in 1921 that was too much to ask.

MOSQUE, CAVES, TEMPLE: India in 1912, the Amritsar affair and its aftermath, Dewas State Senior in 1921. The correspondences between Forster's experiences and his novel are not of course quite as neat as this, but they are close enough to suggest that news of the Amritsar Massacre gave Forster much more than some details of the Marabar Caves affair. Renewing as it did the trauma of the War itself, it supplied the pivotal experience of Forster's last novel, and gave the book its final form.

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Column

I MAKE NO EXCUSE for returning to the subject of Watergate, even though a monthly columnist like myself is necessarily left far behind in the wake of events, and even though those events are amply covered day by day in the press and on television. But by now we perhaps already know enough to form some general picture of what Watergate means and some general hypothesis of what actually happened, and it is doubtful if any further revelations, however startling they may be in detail, will substantially change what we already know. *The Times* (of London) indeed believes that, with Mr Mitchell's testimony and his flat denial that President Nixon either knew anything about Watergate or the attempt to cover it up, the Watergate Saga has reached and passed its climax and all that remains is for Americans to try and repair the damage that has been done.

It took a long time for this stage to be reached, just as it took a long time for the Dreyfus case to develop into *L'Affaire* which convulsed the whole of France. When the news of the raid on the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee was first published, it seemed at first a minor episode in American domestic politics and certainly had little or no effect on the Presidential election campaign which was then in progress. President Nixon lost no votes by it and Senator McGovern tried in vain to make it an election issue. By now it would probably have been forgotten, if it had not been for the nagging enquiries of the *Washington Post*, which has played something of the same part in Watergate as Clemenceau's *L'Aurore* did in the Dreyfus case.

So from a minor incident, Watergate grew into a scandal, but still a purely and characteristically American scandal, which foreigners might follow with fascination, together with a certain smug feeling of self-satisfaction that such things are possible "only in America"; but certainly with no sense that they might be affected by it. For a time it even appeared that President Nixon might emerge from the Affair politically unscathed, his achievements in Viet Nam, in Moscow, and Peking weighing more in the balance than any minor peccadilloes committed by over-enthusiastic assistants in their zeal to secure his re-election.

A third stage in the Affair was reached with the opening of the Senate committee's hearings, which have undoubtedly increased public suspicion of the part played by the President and emphasised the ugly dilemma with which he is faced; that if he knew about Watergate and its aftermath, he had betrayed his trust as President, and if he did not, he was not competent to be President. Mr Nixon's own efforts to face this dilemma did nothing to restore public confidence in him; and their effect has hardly been improved by his daughter's assurances that Daddy is a wonderful President and a great American. There was a time, during the 1930s, when opponents of President Roosevelt used to denounce the iniquities of "the sick man in the White House"; but today President Nixon is, politically speaking, a sicker man than President Roosevelt ever was, and his sickness threatens to infect the entire government of the United States.

And with this one might say that the Affair has reached a fourth stage, with the realisation, abroad as well as at home, that Watergate may for some time to come deprive the United States government of the possibility of effective political action, at a time when the most urgent problems are pressing for a solution. This is a prospect which brings no comfort even to Mr Nixon's bitterest enemies, unless they also happen to be enemies of the United States, while her friends and allies can only contemplate it with dismay. Even the most cautious financial commentators have agreed that Watergate made a significant contribution to the recent fall in the value of the dollar and the accompanying fall in sterling. As we watch the Senate hearings unfold on television, we now have the uneasy feeling that the testimony of Mr Mitchell or Mr Ehrlichman or Mr Haldeman or any of the Christian Science Mafia which Mr Nixon has organised in the White House will have an effect on the future not only of Americans but of ourselves.

HOW HAVE AMERICANS reacted to the situation created by Watergate? One of the most striking expressions of the feelings of uneasiness and apprehension with which they are afflicted is to be found in a recent column by Stewart Alsop in *Newsweek*. Mr Alsop was discussing the possibilities which the future held for Mr Nixon and it was noticeable that he took it for granted that none of them was likely to be very agreeable. One of them was impeachment; he ruled this out because it "could tear the country apart like no event since the Civil War", and create a conflict which would be even more disastrous if impeachment failed to secure the necessary two-thirds majority in the Senate. Most observers would by now probably agree with this view of Mr Alsop's, not because of any firm belief in Mr Nixon's innocence, but because

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of the growing realisation of the dangers to which impeachment would expose the country.

The second possibility is Mr Nixon's resignation. Mr Alsop rules this out also, because Mr Nixon is not one of the resigning kind; though Mr Alsop concedes that under certain circumstances even Mr Nixon, as a patriotic American, may come to see that resignation is the last best service he can render to his country.

The third, and in Mr Alsop's view far the most likely possibility is that Mr Nixon will, in the horrible language of the White House, "tough it out", and serve out his term of office until 20 January, 1977. "This is a way of saying that the country will probably be presided over for the next three years and more by a paraplegic President."

A paraplegic President! It is an ugly and a frightening phrase; what Mr Alsop means by it is that henceforward Mr Nixon will have lost the capacity for effective action because any proposal emanating from the White House will automatically be opposed by Congress and because he can no longer control even his own White House staff and in particular no longer controls the Department of Justice, "an essential instrument of presidential power." To Mr Alsop this reads like a recipe for governmental paralysis; and to those who would welcome a reduction in the power of the President and a reassertion of Congressional authority he points out that "the brief periods of Congressional domination have been sad and futile, from the Reconstruction period on. The reason is simple. It is not possible for a committee of 535, or even a committee of 100, to run a big country sensibly." In this gloomy prospect, the only ray of light Mr Alsop can discern is that Mr Nixon has been forced to purge his White House staff. "The picture of the inner Administration that emerges from the testimony of Dean, Magruder and company is a picture of a nest of vipers—and incompetent, paranoiac vipers at that. . . . It was essential to clear the vipers' nest out of the White House."

THERE IS INDEED SOMETHING horrifying in the spectacle of life in the White House as revealed in the testimony of Mr Nixon's staff. The only puzzle is that before Watergate no one seems to have remarked on it, that Mr Nixon did not notice it for himself, and that his assistants were so blandly unaware of how deeply their power had corrupted them. Whatever Mr Nixon's degree of responsibility for Watergate, in nothing has he been more culpable than the degradation in which he has involved the White House, and for this he is wholly and solely responsible. Did not the President's family, one feels, sometimes wonder at the kind of men with whom he liked to surround himself and, if we accept his tributes to Mr Haldeman and Mr Ehrlichman, would still like to surround himself, if only they had not made their continued presence in the White House intolerable? If there were vipers in the White House, and paranoia reigned there, everyone seems to have become acclimatised to the situation after four years of President Nixon. Indeed, in the happy days before Watergate, the general impression of the Nixon administration was that it was, if without much style or charm or popular appeal, an efficient and realistic one; a business administration which, as they say, meant business, and knew how to go about it and get its business done. Who could have guessed that it was in the hands of the vicious amateurs who were responsible for Watergate?

It is the contrast between reality and illusion at the White House which has struck another Commentator on Watergate, Mr Irving Kristol, once joint editor of ENCOUNTER and now of *The Public Interest*. His views on Watergate are perhaps particularly significant because he is no enemy, but rather an admirer of Mr Nixon's; in fact, until recently he was in danger of becoming the Nixon administration's favourite intellectual. There was said to have been bulk purchase at the White House of his recent book, *On the Democratic Idea in America*, which was prescribed reading for Mr Nixon and his staff. Did the vipers and paranoiacs read it, one wonders? Did Mr Dean and Mr Mitchell read it? And Messrs Haldeman and Ehrlichman? And Mr Chuck Colson and Mr Gordon Liddy? There is something irresistibly comic in the idea of the Watergate conspirators spending their evenings off from break-ins and buggings studying *On the Democratic Idea in America*. Certainly they have much to learn on the subject.

Mr Kristol writes about Watergate more in sorrow than in anger. For he has now woken up to the fact that all is not well at the White House, and frankly, it puzzles him. It even frightens him. But not for the reasons that might affect less sophisticated, less conservative, less coolly disillusioned observers, who unlike Mr Kristol believe that the democratic idea is also an ideal and naïvely expect some touch of its idealism to have rubbed off on their government. For Mr Kristol that sort of thing is political baby-talk. What worries him most about Watergate is quite simply that he cannot understand it, and he believes that this is what chiefly worries the majority of his fellow-Americans. "Watergate", he writes in the *Wall Street Journal*, of which he is a highly valued member of the Board of Contributors, "is a nightmare", because practically

"the entire White House staff, and perhaps even the President himself, have been living in a different

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> world from the rest of us. Many sins may be tolerated in government, but not the sin of incomprehensibility. People need to feel they understand their government, even if they find some of its behavior shocking. An irrational government is the citizen's ultimate nightmare."

For Mr Kristol, Watergate is the result of a kind of bad dream that has bewitched the White House:

> "of a wave of collective delusion, suspicion and paranoia engulfing high White House circles and overwhelming all the barriers that common sense erects against such a possibility; of an unreal reality imposing itself on the political process, a new reality which a great many perfectly sensible and ordinarily law-abiding men gradually accommodated themselves to, as part of the day's work. I am sure that many of those now testifying before a grand jury find their own testimony incredible, and *cannot explain, even to themselves, why they did* the things they did."

It is as if, in Mr Kristol's eyes, a magician's wand had passed over Washington, and the White House, like some enchanted palace, had fallen under an evil spell in which men no longer knew what they were doing.

Such a theory of political conspiracy as a form of necromancy is ingenious and has a certain beguiling charm, but I doubt if it will carry much conviction even to the readers of the *Wall Street Journal*. After all, who was the sorcerer who found such willing apprentices? It may, however, bring them a little comfort, and perhaps that is what they need most at the present time. For what is characteristic about nightmares is that they are quickly over and we can wake up to the sober light of today and convince ourselves that we have only been frightening ourselves with phantoms. But Watergate is not a dream; it is a system of government elaborated over years by Mr Kristol's "perfectly sensible and ordinarily law-abiding men", and deliberately adopted by them to achieve a perfectly rational end; to re-elect a President and maintain him in office. It is not "an unreal reality imposing itself on the political process"; it has become the reality of the political process itself. It *is* the political process. Nor will it go away when we wake up.

Mr Kristol's distinction between the "unreal reality" of Watergate and the presumably "real" reality of the world of his "perfectly sensible and ordinarily law-abiding men" is not really one which will stand up to serious examination. There is nothing really incomprehensible about the behaviour of any of those who have been deeply involved in Watergate, and in their testimony they give perfectly rational accounts of their behaviour and the motives which made them behave as they did. Any small-time crook would give the same kind of account and explanation of his misdemeanours, and no one would find it in the least incomprehensible or irrational. It is only when the morality of their behaviour is questioned that they fall into a confusion which seems to reveal the kind of moral vacuum at the centre of the political system which they operated. For Watergate, on their own admission, was the product, and the symbol, of a political system which had one exclusive objective: to maintain and promote the power of the President. Some of the Watergate conspirators, like Mr Dean, have been willing to concede in their testimony that they may have erred in thinking that "the end justified the means", but even in this they mis-state the case. It was not that they adopted bad means for a good end, but that the end itself was an inadmissible one in a democratic system.

It is, I think, the realisation that this is so which has so disturbed and alarmed the American people. At least one hopes that this is the case, because it seems to provide the only conditions on which, even yet, some good may yet come out of Watergate. Essentially it is the hope, however fragile, that, as the novelist Mr James A. Michener has said in an article in the Sunday *Times* (of New York) entitled *Is America Burning*?: "If Mr Nixon retains office, as seems likely, he will not be emasculated, but he will be chastened and thus better fitted to govern."

> "He will be forced to retreat from his programme of executive aggrandisement and return to the sober constraints of the Constitution. He will be forced to cooperate with Congress. He will be forced to consider more carefully his relationship to the courts and the men he appoints to them. Most of all he will be required to stop dealing only with millionaires and will return to the commoner people who constitute the great body of this nation."

And, adds Mr Michener, he will have to abandon that "near-fascist philosophy of the football field, 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'. . . ."

Mr Michener's hopes assume in the President a capacity for moral recuperation and reform which, at the present time, very few people would feel inclined to credit him with. Nevertheless, they probably represent the only basis on which the United States can find a way out of the near-disaster in which it has been involved by Watergate.

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Malcolm X

A Reassessment—By JONATHAN POWER

AT THE SAME TIME AS Martin Luther King's non-violent Civil Rights Movement was getting off the ground in the south, a small and rather strange religious sect, after a long period of stagnation, was beginning to gather support in the north. It was called the Nation of Islam, now more commonly known as the Black Muslims.

Its leader was and continued to be Elijah Muhammad. He claims to be a messenger from Allah who was given God's message by Wallace D. Fard in Detroit in 1931. Fard said that he was a member of Muhammad's own tribe, the Koreish, and claimed he was God in Person. Fard told Elijah that the whites were a devil race created by the whim of a mad scientist, Yacub, sixty-six hundred years ago. The white race would rule the world for 6,000 years, down to our time, and then would be overthrown by the blacks. After helping Elijah Muhammad establish the Nation of Islam, Fard mysteriously disappeared. For twenty-five years it existed as a small unimportant sect lost in Detroit's black ghetto. Although its teachings were in many respects a perverse form of Islam its members did follow to the letter certain Islamic precepts, and they abjured alcohol, drugs, and sexual promiscuity. From such a discipline, Elijah argued, they would draw their strength to rid the world of white influence.

Some years after the Black Muslims were formed—one cannot be exactly sure when, Elijah began to propagate his ideas in America's prisons. In competition with evangelical Christian pamphleteers, Muhammad mailed out his message of redemption and vision. For those mauled and degraded by the poverty, dislocation, and failure that had turned them to crime, Elijah's message seemed to give hope. Unlike the Christian sects it had the advantage of speaking to the black condition. It was a religion, it claimed, only for blacks. Not even the Christian Pentecostal sects could claim that. It justified bitterness and at the same time offered a way to a new pride which would assuage the feelings of hopelessness and rejection.

One of those who came into contact with Elijah's message while in prison was Malcolm Little. (Later, as was the Muslim custom, he changed his name to Malcolm X, substituting the *"X"* for his old slave family name; slaves usually took their surname from their master.) It was Malcolm who was to build up the Nation of Islam to its present-day importance with its mosques in nearly every northern city, its farms, stores, bakeries, hair-dressers and supermarkets, and its newspaper with a circulation of half a million. (It is now estimated to have a book value of $74 million.) Even more important he was to lay the foundations for the Black Power movement that was to sweep the world in the late 1960s, putting into two emotive and pungent words the feelings of rage and frustration that were rampant throughout black America and many parts of the Third World. But when Malcolm X joined the Black Muslims in 1952 after his release from prison, its membership was a paltry 400.[1]

THE REASONS FOR the Black Muslims' growth to become the major black nationalist organisation of the 1950s and '60s are rather similar to those that accounted for the rise of the Civil Rights movement—the disturbing effects of the major wars and the culmulative effect of the work of the NAACP. There was also a firm tradition of black nationalism in the northern ghettos. Although it had only appealed to a small minority and had not made much progress in emancipating the blacks politically it had had some emotional and psychological appeal.

As far back as the 1840s there was popular talk among radical intellectuals advocating armed slave rebellions. The theory of "defensive violence" came to the fore during the decade immediately after the First World War. Similarly the big

[1] *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (with the assistance of Alex Haley), (Penguin, 1968), p. 36.

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city riots of the 1960s were no new phenomenon. In the Chicago riot of 1919 nearly 30 people lost their lives, and in the Detroit and Harlem riots of 1943 30 died.

The best known of the "old school" of black nationalists was Marcus Garvey who in 1914 founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association. (Malcolm X's father was a Garveyite.) Garvey's dream was the wholesale migration of American blacks to Africa. On a more down-to-earth basis he encouraged black businesses and his organisation established a chain of groceries, restaurants, laundries, a printing plant, and a steamship line. He also argued the case for "defensive violence"; that blacks should defend themselves with weapons if necessary, particularly when attacked by hostile white groups. He wrote, "Beat the Negro, brutalise the Negro, kill the Negro, burn the Negro, imprison the Negro, scoff at the Negro, deride the Negro, it may come back to you one of these fine days. . . ." In essence he deployed the same arguments used by Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael half-a-century later—arguments which in the 1960s roused fear and hysteria from one end of white America to the other, but which in the early years of the century were largely ignored.

JUST AS AN ANALYSIS of the reasons for the birth of the Civil Rights movement brings one to the personality of Martin Luther King, so does an account of the growth of the Black Muslims hinge on the particular abilities of Malcolm X. It is a curious thing that at almost the same time black America should produce two such outstanding charismatic political leaders, one in the south and one in the north. Both of them confronted a mood that was awaiting leadership to bring it into focus—a mood that would no doubt have erupted into a political movement of some kind anyway given the way the pressure and consciousness had been building up. But both of them propelled it at a rate that nobody foresaw—such were their unique capacities for leadership. Nevertheless it is probably fair to say that Malcolm would never have been as significant as he was without Martin Luther King. It was King's non-violent Civil Rights campaigns that precipitated the black cause so rapidly to the centre of the domestic political stage. Without that Malcolm's position would have never seemed such a threat and would have never attracted the news coverage it did. It was Martin Luther King who established the blacks as a serious political force and made the direction they took of national political concern.[2]

One sees little reference to the Muslims in the Sorenson and Schlesinger biographies of President Kennedy. Yet "Civil Rights" was a constant preoccupation.

Malcolm built up the Black Muslim membership in the decade he was with them from about 400 to 40,000. During this time the movement opened mosques in most of the principal northern cities. Its success in rehabilitating criminals and dope addicts was such that its methods became the subject of reputable academic, medical and sociological study. Its vigorous code of conduct provided a comforting underpinning for those who sought to break with the pressures of a debilitating urban slum life.

For all its numerical and sociological success the Black Muslims were not a major political force. Elijah preferred not to confront white society head-on. He made it consciously apolitical in means, although it had political ends—three or four separate independent black states. This was the only aspect of Elijah's policy with which Malcolm disagreed.

> If I harbored any personal disappointment whatsoever, it was that privately I was convinced that our Nation of Islam could be an even greater force in the American black man's overall struggle—if we engaged in more action. By that, I mean I thought privately that we should have amended, or relaxed, our general non-engagement policy. I felt that, wherever black people committed themselves, in the Little Rocks and the Birminghams and other places, militantly disciplined Muslims should also be there—for all the world to see, and respect, and discuss.
>
> It could be heard increasingly in the Negro communities: "Those Muslims *talk* tough, but they never *do* anything unless somebody bothers Muslims."[3]

But whatever Malcolm's private thoughts, he kept them very much to himself and for over a decade he went along with the traditional Black Muslim views on political action. So quiet and low key was Black Muslim activity that it was not until late 1959, when the CBS's Mike Wallace Show produced a television documentary on the Muslims, that it received any kind of national attention. The documentary was dramatically titled: "The Hate that Hate Produced." As Malcolm himself said of it: it "was edited tightly into a kaleidoscope of shocker images." Blasting as it did into an arena that had been dominated by the image of Martin Luther King its impact was shattering. The public reaction to the documentary was likened to the response that greeted Orson Welles' famous radio programme in 1938 when he described, as though it was actually happening, an invasion of men from Mars.

[2] Interestingly Stokely Carmichael makes a similar point in the collection *Stokely Speaks* (Random House, 1971).

[3] *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, p. 397.

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Police switchboards were inundated, newspaper correspondence columns were flooded. The newspaper headlines reflected the national mood: "Hate-teachers . . . violence-seekers . . . black racists . . . possibly Communist inspired." The press, having found a gripping story, played it for all it was worth. In fact they have continued playing it—or rather variations on the same theme—from then until the present. Malcolm himself credited the press with making the Muslims important:

> You will often hear today a lot of Negro leaders complaining that what thrust the Muslims into international prominence was the white man's press, radio, television and other media. I have no shred of argument with that. They are absolutely correct. Why, none of us in the Nation of Islam remotely anticipated what was about to happen.

THE PUBLICITY MADE the Black Muslims important but by playing to white fears it stirred up hostile emotions that were to give the Muslims an even stronger *raison d'être* and inevitably contributed to their growth. Popular journalism merely stressed their separatist philosophy and the Yacub story. Little was said about their success in rehabilitating convicts and drug addicts or their stabilising effect on the weakening family bonds in ghetto life. Accused of hatred they became even more hateful. More blacks felt driven to the Muslims' cause. Mike Wallace's catchy title took another circuit. Every time there was a riot or a rumour of a riot Malcolm was asked by the press for his opinion. Malcolm did not pull his punches when he spoke. Inevitably in the public mind the image of disturbance, destruction and the Muslims fused into one. The reality was almost the reverse. The Muslims' emphasis on religion, discipline, and personal stability was in effect anti-riot; Malcolm himself admitted with candid honesty (after calming down an angry Harlem crowd) that although the press said he was the only Negro "who could stop a race riot or start one", "I don't know if I could do either."

In point of fact the Muslims were removed from much of the frustration of those who rioted. They had created their own world that was self-fulfilling and self-satisfying; it did not lend itself to isolated frustrated outbursts. It did not attract those who could not take the rigorous disciplinary code of the Muslims. This remoteness from the everyday life of the black populace increasingly worried Malcolm. Inwardly he was becoming conscious of the political failure of the introverted policies of the Black Muslims. At the same time his own personal success—particularly in the media—was becoming the source of increasing jealousy among Elijah and his inner circle. But it took something completely different to bring Malcolm's disenchantment to a head, so emotionally was he wedded to the Black Muslim life. It was the deeply upsetting discovery that Elijah Muhammad had not been practising his own moral precepts; he had made two of his secretaries pregnant.

IN NOVEMBER 1963 Malcolm broke with Elijah and seven months later he established his own organisation—the Organisation of Afro-American Unity (OAAU). Although Malcolm retained his own attachment to Islam (having questioned Elijah's perverse interpretation of it) he carefully played down religious and moral behaviour in an attempt to give it "broad-based secular appeal" (He felt the cause of personal behaviour could best be served by his own private example.)

To Malcolm's great surprise, however, his organisation did not attract many members. It was an unpropitious moment to try and launch a new political organisation. Dr King was at the height of his powers—having just won the first major piece of civil rights legislation for a hundred years—and was visibly embroiled in a fast-moving Voting Rights campaign. Blacks who were politically inclined were emotionally tuned, by and large, to Dr King. Stokely Carmichael boasted that in the summer of 1964 he told Malcolm: "You keep your talk, and you can say what you want, I don't even think you put me in a better bargaining position, you know, because you don't say anything." Even the cynical were adopting a "wait-and-see" attitude. Malcolm himself was perturbed by the amount of support Dr King had. It is at this point we can see most clearly the different stature of the two men. Malcolm: angry, self-disciplined, but politically at sea. King: determined, uncompromising, riding the crest of his own wave. The one had rightly judged the emotions of many ghetto blacks but had misjudged their political sophistication. The other had taken the mood for what it was and by a feat of unsurpassed leadership channelled it into a new form of imaginative and creative political action. It was obvious who was the greater man. To underline King's achievement at this time one has merely to juxtapose two quotations from President Kennedy's principal biographers, one written on the thinking of the Kennedy Administration before and during the early stages of King's 1963 Birmingham campaign and the other commenting on the changed mood created by it. First, Theodore Sorenson:

> But for two years no other civil rights measures were sought or enacted. Bills originating in the Congress were endorsed by administration witnesses, thus technically fulfilling the pledges of the 1960 platform, but none of these was adopted or

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*Black Panthers**

New York City

RICHARD MOORE, A BLACK PANTHER, *was sentenced in State Supreme Court yesterday to life imprisonment for attempting to kill two policemen here with a machine gun in May, 1971.*

The tumultuous hour-long hearing ended when the 29-year-old defendant stalked out of the courtroom and went back to the nearby detention pen. Justice Joseph A. Martinis sent the clerk to advise Moore of his rights to appeal, and the clerk announced seconds later that Moore had replied:

"My appeal will be over the barrel of a gun."

"What?" cried the judge from the bench.

"My appeal will be over the barrel of a gun," the clerk, Frank Lanotte, glumly quoted Moore as having replied.

MOORE IS THE FIRST *Black Panther in New York State, and possibly in the country, according to the Manhattan District Attorney's office, to be convicted and imprisoned in connection with the recent attempts by black militants to kill policemen. Moore, a tall, thin man with a stern, hawk-like face, has repeatedly been linked by law-enforcement agents to the Black Liberation Army, a small, loose-knit band of militants allegedly dedicated to killing policemen.*

District Attorney Frank S. Hogan refused yesterday to comment on the sentence but his office is known to regard it, as one prosecutor put it, as "a major triumph."

Assistant District Attorney Terence O'Reilly, asked to interpret Moore's remarks, said he thought the meaning was "pretty clear." "I charged during the trial," he said, "that we were dealing with a man who has nothing but scorn and disdain for the word 'justice' as we know it. His is a revolutionary justice. The only justice he knows comes out of the end of a gun."

The Moore case began on May 19, 1971, when Officers Thomas Curry and Nicholas Binetti, on guard outside Mr. Hogan's apartment on upper Riverside Drive, were hit by machine-gun bullets fired from a moving car.

Moore was arrested June 5, 1971, and was charged with the crime after he held up a social club in the Bronx and a weapon used in that holdup turned out to be the one used in the attack on the two policemen.

Two days before the machine-gun attack, Moore was acquitted in absentia of having conspired to blow up police stations around the city. He had fled to Algeria while free on $100,000 bail. He was also indicted in the killing of a West Coast Panther official in Queens, but a mistrial was declared in that case.

NEW YORK TIMES

Oakland

THE APARTMENT BUILDING *rises twenty-six floors above the south shore of Oakland's Lake Merritt, housing those wealthy white citizens who continue to buck the demographic trend and stay within the increasingly black city of Oakland, as middle-class whites flee into or over the low hills to the east. The apartments here are expensive, and yet, aside from indoor putting green and first-floor beauty salon, the building is neither particularly lush nor well-made. It is simply* secure: *the guard in the overdecorated lobby will not admit a stranger even through the front door, and a closed-circuit television camera allows each resident to view precisely who that stranger is.*

One of the troubles lives in a glass-walled penthouse on the twenty-fifth floor of this bourgeois citadel: Huey Pierce Newton, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, just two years out of prison from serving time on a manslaughter charge ultimately reversed and dismissed, and now Supreme Servant of the People. The Panther Central Committee decision to move Newton into the penthouse made great headlines. A bit later, the Panther "split," involving Newton and Eldridge Cleaver, was equally celebrated. But what else is the once-notorious, now-reclusive Huey Newton up to?

An index of the changing temper of the Black Panther Party may be found in the full-page drawings that appear weekly in the Panther newspaper. In a typical issue of 1969, the back-page cartoon showed a field of bullet-riddled police-uniformed pigs being trampled beneath the feet of strong, clear-eyed blacks carrying carbines. The caption reads: "The Gun in the Hands of a Guerrilla Is the Seed of Revolution." Almost exactly three years later, the drawing is a small sad black child holding an empty bowl. "When Will I Smile?" the caption asks. "When There is No More Hunger." Clearly, something here has changed. And the primary source of that change, in the eyes of both those who welcome it and those who revile it, is Huey P. Newton.

HUEY NEWTON *is a bit of a mystery now, I tell him one fall afternoon, high in the penthouse overlooking the Oakland waterfront to the west, and the downtown and Berkeley to the hazy north. He is at the long table in the dining area, finishing an early dinner of fried chicken and vegetables, washing it down with a small glass of rum. His bodyguard sits silently behind us, on one of the living-room couches.*

"Let me show you what I do." Newton leaves the room briefly, as a dishwater starts up in the kitchen, and when he returns it is with a stack of manuscripts in arm. "First of all," he says, dumping the thick bundles on the table, "I write." He has two books under contract, and—revolutionary literature being big business these days—considerable money for Panther projects comes from publishers' advances. Newton arranges the manuscripts around the table and then hovers nearby, turning pages, pointing here and there. "My autobiography. Revolutionary Suicide."

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* *See in previous* ENCOUNTERS: *Melvin J. Lasky, "A Reading of the Black Panther" (*ENCOUNTER, *January 1971); Colin MacInnes, "A Dissent" (March 1971); Martin Kilson, "The 'Put-On' of Black Panther Rhetoric" (April 1971); George Feaver, "The Panther's Road to Suicide" (May 1971).*

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(continuing story of)

The new Panther emphasis on community action and electoral politics has bitterly disappointed those radicals who still favour a revolutionary pose of a more romantic nature. "This kind of person," Newton says, "would say, 'I don't like the Party any more because they're not having shoot-outs.' That's the same person who, if you asked him, what are you doing to build a revolutionary organization to serve the people?"—Newton puts on a blank face, shrugs —" 'Well, nothing.' So then you say, oh, so the Party let you down, there's not a shoot-out every week, are you trying to get a shoot-out going? When was the last time you killed somebody?" Newton shrugs again. "No answer." We have been discussing white radicalism, and now he points across the table at me. "If you asked that question, you'd probably get a lot of argument. But when they meet me, they lack the *eligibility*. I say, I've got a track record of at least being accused—of which I'm innocent—so then I ask them, what qualifies you to question my integrity?"

". . . George Wallace's American Independent Party is the only real political party left in this country. They have an idea, they have people, they don't depend on anyone, and that's why they cause so much trouble. I'm not saying follow Wallace, so don't print that—I'm talking about building a vehicle, and that's what our party is doing right now."

THERE IS PROBABLY *no longer a college in the country that turns out students with a fraction of Newton's intellectual background. "Twelve years of formal education," he tells me, "is twelve years of formal ignorance."*

Functionally illiterate until the age of eighteen, he now speed-reads everything from texts on pan-Africanism to the semanticist Alfred Korzybski, and he does not mind describing the change. Yet beneath what may simply be some shrewd public-relations work is also a broader sort of philosophical humility. "As a student of dialectical materialism, I am a student of the universe," he tells me, "and I'm never really the master—always the student. Once you think you can't be corrected, once you think you can't lose an argument, then you're a fool. And I don't want to be the fool.

"I have a nephew who's studying to be a mathematician, and every time I solve one of his problems, he's shocked. I have to wrestle it out of him—what is the quantity, quality, weight and value of this? What do you mean by this symbol? And then I work it out for him and he's shocked, because he knows I've never learned to multiply or divide, and so I kid him with my rhetoric. 'How did you know?' he's always asking, and I say because I'm armed with an invincible weapon: Marxist-Leninist dialectical thinking."

MICHAEL ROGERS in *Esquire Magazine*

Boston

THE BOSTON *assassination of Hakim Jamal, 34-year-old former boyfriend of Gale Benson, the British girl found murdered in the Trinidad home of Black Power leader Michael X, came as a surprise to Black activists in Britain.*

Shot dead yesterday by a four-man gang, in front of his wife, he is believed to have been executed for betraying "the purity of the Black Revolution."

His killers are known to be members of a sinister and violent extremist movement called *De Mau Mau*.

Three of the four men who burst into 42-year-old Jamal's apartment are being held by police.

De Mau Mau sprang up from the ranks of embittered black soldiers who fought in the Viet Nam war.

Jamal was president of the Malcolm X organisation—named after the black leader assassinated eight years ago.

WHAT SURPRISED *activists was his capacity to dodge assassins or the police as his life-style was one which bordered on the bizarre and the illegal.*

Jamal made more life-long enemies than friends and was once described by a Black Power leader as "a vicious psychopath who would let nothing stand in his way."

A celebrated hustler who actually believed he was the new Black Messiah, Jamal was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1931. A self-confessed alcoholic and drug addict at the age of 14, he was freed, he once told a close friend, by his conversion to Islam when he changed his name from Alan Donaldson to Hakim Jamal, and by the influence of Malcolm X, of whom he claimed to be a relative.

But this claim, like so many others, was a gross lie. Six or seven years ago he moved to Los Angeles, where he promoted a Malcolm X Foundation for under-privileged black children.

He showed remarkable talent at collecting money for the project and celebrities like Marlon Brando, Jean Seberg, Jane Fonda, among other whites whom he claimed as close friends, contributed. But like other things, this is where Jamal's talents came to an end. The school collapsed just over a year later.

Jamal possessed the knack of befriending beautiful women. At the collapse of the school he had arrived in Europe in the company of Jean Seberg. In 1969 he had moved to London, initially staying with Corin Redgrave, Vanessa's younger brother. They did a good deal to give him a start in London. Socially he became a celebrity.

DURING THIS PERIOD *Jamal met Gale Benson. His influence on her was so great that she adopted the Muslim name of Hale Kimga. She became his mistress—his "handmaiden" she used to insist—and acted as his PRO to possible White supporters.*

It was during this period that Jamal actually started believing that he was God. His only believer was Gale Benson, whom he had completely mesmerised.

The events at Arima leading to the bizarre killing of Gale Benson on the morning of January 2 are still to be established in the courts in Trinidad, but what is very clear is that Jamal's behaviour during those days was indeed very strange.

EVENING STANDARD/DAILY EXPRESS

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pressed by the President as his own. The reason was arithmetic. The August 1960 defeat of civil rights measures in the more liberal Eighty-sixth Congress —as well as the voting patterns in January of 1961 in the Rules Committee fight in the House and the cloture rule fight in the Senate—all made it obvious that no amount of Presidential pressure could put through the Eighty-seventh Congress a meaningful legislative package on civil rights. . . .

Because he [Kennedy] said little publicly, because he still sought the least divisive answers, because he still relied on reason and persuasion, most of the Negro leaders complained about the administration's attitude towards Birmingham. They were angry at the Kennedys for requesting a moratorium on demonstrations while an agreement was worked out and the city government settled. They resented the Kennedys' questioning their use of small children in demonstrations which subjected them to possible injury as well as jail. They were suspicious of Burke Marshall and other Justice aides who had been striving for more than a year to negotiate privately some peaceful progress in that troubled community.[4]

And here is Professor Arthur Schlesinger, commenting on the outcome of King's campaign:

The events in Birmingham abruptly transformed the mood of the nation. Churchmen, whose piety had studiously overlooked what John Quincy Adams had called the foul stain on the American conscience, idealistic students, recently preoccupied with disarming the United States and leaving the Soviet Union the great nuclear power in the world, ordinary citizens, complacent in their assumptions of virtue, were for a season jerked into guilt and responsibility. Bull Connor's police dogs accused the conscience of white America in terms which could no longer be ignored. But the awakening was so belated that it could hardly claim moral credit. Adam Clayton Powell, the urbane and cynical Negro congressman from Harlem, stated it with precision from Paris in May: all of a sudden in Birmingham the white man had come face to face with the fact that his numerical superiority and naked power could no longer contain the black mass.

He has seen little children stand up against dogs, pistol-packing policemen and pressure hose, and they kept on coming, wave after wave. So the white man is afraid. He is afraid of his own conscience. . . . Now is the time to keep him on the run.[5]

Birmingham's city leadership was forced to sue for peace and President Kennedy found himself able to bring forth strong and extensive legislative proposals, convinced that there was an excellent chance of their passage through Congress. In no Western democracy in modern times has an entrenched position of a majority been upset so rapidly.

DURING THE EARLY DAYS of the 1955 Selma voting rights campaign, Malcolm was driven to pledge his help to the freedom marchers. Once, finding himself sitting next to Mrs King on a platform at a rally in Selma, Malcolm confided to her his belief that his presence would help Dr King. It would compel the whites, he argued to her, to take Dr King more seriously for fear of the alternative.

INEVITABLY, given his disillusionment with the Muslims, his inability to compete with Dr King and his failure to convince the angry and bitter members of the ghetto that he could give them effective political leadership, Malcolm became increasingly at a loss what to do.

He had closed one important source of support by stating after his return from Mecca that his organisation would not be anti-white: that sympathetic whites should be treated as political allies. This new position grew out of his perception that Islamic society did not recognise racial differences. But it meant that the extreme militant elements of the ghetto now had reservations about him. Alex Haley, who wrote Malcolm's autobiography, records in his introduction:

There were, variously expressed, two primary complaints. One was that actually Malcolm X only talked, but other civil rights organisations were doing. "All he's ever done was talk, CORE and SNCC and some of them people of Dr King's are getting beat over the head." The second major complaint was that Malcolm X himself was too confused to be seriously followed any longer. "He doesn't know what he believes in. No sooner do you hear one thing than he's switched to something else." The two complaints were not helping the old firebrand Malcolm X image any, nor were they generating the local public interest that was badly needed by his small, young OAAU.[6]

All this inevitably got Malcolm down: "He talked about the pressures on him everywhere he turned, and about the frustrations, among them that no one wanted to accept anything relating to him except 'my old "hate" and "violence" image.' He said 'the so-called moderate' civil-rights organisations avoided him as 'too moderate'. 'They won't let me turn the corner!' he once exclaimed, 'I'm caught in a trap!'."[7]

Malcolm's new biographer, Peter Goldman,[8] has summed up his plight succinctly:

. . . To this degree, he was a prisoner of his past. Malcolm had made his name and his constituency burning whites, all of them, uniformly and mercilessly. He had won a following not merely because he was charming or magnetic or manly or had sex appeal but because of his rage; a good many ordinary black people saw in him the vicarious agent of their own secret furies. To the extent that his fires now burned cooler, he was breaking faith with that following—and since he had not yet established a new audience, he could not yet afford

[4] Theodore C. Sorenson, *Kennedy* (Pan ed., 1966), pp. 525–526.
[5] Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days* (1965), p. 817.
[6] *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, p. 45.
[7] *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, p. 48.
[8] *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*. By PETER GOLDMAN. Harper & Row, $8.95.

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to lose the old one. He tried, at different times and in different places, to address them both; neither was wholly satisfied. The downtown press, upon whose mercies he depended for that new regard he sought, was pleased enough with his access of humankindness after the hajj but was quickly bored by it as copy and began ignoring him except when he said something outrageous. His older followers, for their part, remained suspicious—sometimes violently so. Quarrels broke out among them. "In a room one night," Kenyatta told me, "I had to hold some brothers off Malcolm."

Although Malcolm's command of press coverage at its peak had been quite enormous it was out of proportion to the amount of grass roots appeal he actually had—at least while he was alive. However it was the press coverage that brought him invitations to speak from all over the world—he was inundated with calls to speak: civil rights groups, churches and universities. He was second only to Barry Goldwater as the most sought-after campus speaker of the day. And it was with these speaking engagements that he occupied most of his time. But the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem which was Malcolm's home speaking-base and where he relayed his ideas to the grass roots only held 400-500 people (400 wooden chairs had been set up at the meeting at which he was assassinated). The number of Elijah's supporters he took with him when he left the Black Muslims was only about 50. Even when he died Harlem was quiet—in marked contrast to the riots that erupted all over America when Dr King was assassinated.[9] An attempt by a new black organisation, the Federation of Independent Political Action, to persuade Harlem business establishments to close for a day of respect, failed. In the end the FIPA got together about 20 pickets to patrol in front of Harlem's largest store, Blunslein's.

Whatever failure Malcolm had in his life in establishing his political ideas, he left an image behind that was powerful enough to live on and influence another day. Newspapers not only in America but around the world gave his death front page headlines. The *New York Times* reported "The London newspapers have probably played the story harder and longer than most"—the *Times* and the *Telegraph* both carried editorial comments. The *Ghanaian Times* called Malcolm X "the militant and most popular of America's anti-segregationalist leaders." The Pakistani *Hurriyet* of Karachi described him as "a great Negro leader." The Lagos *Daily Times* said "he will have a place in the palace of martyrs."

In many ways Malcolm was ahead of his time. The young black northeners who were so readily going to follow Stokely Carmichael and Black Power in two years and three years time were not yet so bereft of hope as to throw caution to the wind. Also he alienated large sections of both the moderates and the radicals. On the one hand the press that was so responsible for making his name well known projected him as some kind of Negro SS leader. On the other hand his refusal to play to untrammelled anti-white feelings bothered the extreme radicals.

But within two years after his death the climate in the black community had sharply changed. His autobiography was now published, making it possible for a wider audience to understand properly what he stood for and what he went through. It was an instant best-seller. Over a million people are estimated to have read it.

Most important was the legacy of his personal influence on people like Stokely Carmichael and other young fieldworkers in SNCC (The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee—the student wing of the Civil Rights Movement) from the time he used to come down south and speak on their platforms. After their own hopes and aspirations were betrayed it was obvious to them that it was to Malcolm's ideas they would turn. Because of their position in broadly-based civil rights movements once they judged the time was ripe they were able to give their ideas effect with devastating impact. That time arrived in May 1966 and Stokely Carmichael, unlike Malcolm X, did not make the mistake of stressing his openness to whites.

It was Black Power. Even so one can argue without being dishonest to the facts that if King had not miscalculated at Selma, Malcolm might now be nothing more than a distant memory.

SELMA, a small town in Alabama, was where Dr Martin Luther King had chosen to portray the injustices of the southern political system that made it almost impossible for blacks to vote. The Selma campaign began in the winter of 1964/1965. By late February ordinary life in Selma was impossible. Nearly every day there had been demonstrations. One of the demonstrators had been shot and killed by the police. Then, at the beginning of March, King proposed the idea of a massive march from Selma to Montgomery, where black demands could be presented to Governor Wallace.

On the first day of the march King was not present. It was a rule in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), King's organisation, that the leadership tried to avoid getting arrested in the early stages of a campaign so that they would be free to organise the crucial follow-up. As the march approached Pettus Bridge, on the road out of Selma, Sheriff Jim Clark let

[9] Stokely Carmichael makes a similar observation. See *Stokely Speaks*, p. 191.

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loose his troopers. It was a bloody carnage; 17 marchers were seriously injured.

King, naturally enough, was incensed. He announced that he himself would lead the second attempt to cross Pettus Bridge. Despite a Federal injunction prohibiting a public march, he was adamant. Clearly the second march was to be a test of wills—a Waterloo. The emotions within the whole of the Civil Rights Movement were running high. Within the SNCC they were at boiling point. The last thing SNCC could contemplate was a compromise with Sheriff Clark. They were going through.

The White House was alarmed. They were fearful what might happen if King were to be seriously injured or, worse, killed. A former Florida Governor, Leroy Collins, was sent in the Presidential plane to plead with King to limit the objectives of the march: not to try to break through the police barriers. Publicly King appeared to be standing up to the White House pressure. Similar pressures had been put upon him before (in Birmingham, in particular) and he had always stood against them. At a large rally before the march he reaffirmed his commitment to cross Pettus Bridge.

But when the marchers did reach the line of police, King unexpectedly ordered the marchers to turn round. Mrs King in her autobiography argues that he did it to avoid "the imminent possibility of a violent confrontation resulting in needless deaths." King also felt, she argued, that their numbers were insufficient to challenge the police: "He constantly emphasised the presence of the masses as both a proof of support and a discouragement to violence."

THIS MAY BE THE TRUTH of the matter, but the militants from SNCC, temperamentally not given to fine political calculations, felt deceived and betrayed. They had not been informed of the change in strategy, and they felt King had capitulated to White House pressures. The incident left a great well of distrust between their SNCC and King's SCLC that was to be drawn from increasingly as the tensions in the black community rose in the coming 18 months. Not even the successful outcome of this campaign —the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Bill— tempered their bitterness. Before Pettus Bridge, King could usually persuade the impetuous young students in SNCC to accept his strategy. From now on it was an uphill battle, and one he eventually lost. King did not realise that SNCC was in a position to do what Malcolm X had not been able to—give the bitter and turbulent elements in black America a national voice and in the end cut the ground from under him. Tragically that had not entered his calculations. If it had, he would perhaps have taken the risk at Pettus Bridge.

FROM THIS POINT ON, "Black Power" was almost inevitable. But if there was any doubt about it, internal troubles within SNCC were making sure its birth was not long delayed. The troubles arose from the relationships between the black student workers and the white ones, who were, in the main, idealistic liberals from northern campuses.[10]

The white students would come down from the north intent on living out some idyllic kind of multiracial life within SNCC. But in the end their behaviour was insulting, often overbearing. They "were bent on showing how 'free' they were around black people", Poussaint wrote, "and would indulge in all manner of unconventional behaviour in the Negro community which the black workers felt they would never dare exhibit 'back home with their own kind.' Many acted as if 'anything goes in the black community'." As Stokely Carmichael pungently put it later, they were "trying to come alive through the black community like some kind of Pepsi generation. . . ."

Many of the white student volunteers, the girls in particular, seemed to believe that they could assuage the guilt of centuries of oppression by making themselves "easily available" to blacks. The white girls had what Poussaint graphically called a "White African Queen complex", openly flaunting their affairs with black men. Inevitably this brought out much black resentment—from the black girls. Poussaint wrote:

> So much energy was expended by both black males and females in discussing the problems created by white girls in particular, that on many days little project work was accomplished. In addition it became clear that local black people were becoming extremely frightened by inter-racial girl-boy liaisons and thus frequently refused to co-operate with the project work.

Compounding all these personal problems was the attitude of the white volunteers towards their work. All too often, because they were better educated and more articulate than the black

[10] The observations that follow I owe primarily to a research paper by Dr Alvin Poussaint, given before the American Psychiatric Association. Poussaint was in a unique position to observe the internal strains, as he was in charge of all the medical and psychiatric work in the Civil Rights Movement. My own conversations with SNCC leaders confirm his observations. Poussaint's argument is that "Black Power" was more a product of the stresses within SNCC than a result of external stimuli.

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students, they tended to pre-empt the decision-making and key jobs. The blacks internalised their resentment and became increasingly bitter. Only a minority of the white volunteers seemed sensitive to this. An explosion was inevitable.

SO IT WAS THE FUSION of two principal currents, the apparent "weakness" of King and the disturbed emotional relationships within SNCC, that made the blacks decide to break with the old ways—integration and non-violence—and go it alone. In May 1966 Stokely Carmichael was elected as Chairman of SNCC. Immediately Carmichael asked the white workers to leave, telling them their place was in their own communities, changing the attitudes of their own people. A month later came his dramatic "Black Power" speech.

One should add, lest it be underestimated, that external events like the Watts riot, which happened only two weeks after the Voting Rights Bill was passed, the apparent failure of President Lyndon Johnson to keep his promise to build a "Great Society", and King's lack of apparent progress in his first northern campaign in Chicago in early 1966, also played a part in changing SNCC thinking.

Martin Luther King failed to hold the Civil Rights Movement together, and for good or ill Malcolm's ideas were given a momentous new lease of life. All the militant leaders since Malcolm have argued that they are the true heirs of Malcolm's thought. In practice they have not always followed it as closely as they make out. It is important then to examine fairly meticulously what his ideas really were.

1. Separatism: While Malcolm X was a member of the Black Muslims he was, of course, a separatist. He argued that Blacks should be given three or four American states for themselves to fashion into their own Nation. After breaking with Elijah he continued for some time to advocate the separatist doctrine, although he no longer maintained that it was the only viable course. Surprisingly he remained wedded to this argument even after his momentous trip to Mecca which had made him rethink the reverse-racism of the Muslims. But towards the end of that tumultuous year of rethinking—from the time of his break with Elijah to his death—he came to reject the Black State idea. He felt that the battle had to be joined within the United States. There could be no escaping it. In an interview on a Canadian radio station a month before his death the following exchange took place:

> *Berton:* But you no longer believe in a black state?
> *Malcolm:* No.
> *Berton:* In North America?
> *Malcolm:* No, I believe in a society in which people can live like human beings on the basis of equality. (From the "Pierre Berton Show", Station CFTO-TV, Toronto, 19 January 1965).[11]

Certainly this position was more consistent with his new found Islamic beliefs.

2. Attitude to Whites: The Black Muslim position was stark and unequivocal on this. Whites were devils and oppressors, and that was the end of it. And Malcolm's own rhetoric was second to none.

> We didn't land on Plymouth Rock, my brothers and sisters—Plymouth Rock landed on *us!*... Give *all* you can to help Messenger Elijah Muhammad's independence programme for the black man! ... This white man has controlled us black people by keeping us running to him begging, "Please, lawdy, please, Mr White Man, boss, would you push me off another crumb down from your table that's sagging with riches....
> ... my *beautiful,* black brothers and sisters! And when we say "black", we mean everything not white, brothers and sisters! Because *look* at your skins! We're all black to the white man, but we're a thousand and one different colours. Turn around, *look* at each other! What shade of black African polluted by devil white man are you? You see me—well, in the streets, they used to call me Detroit Red. Yes! Yes, that raping, red-haired devil was my *grandfather!* That close, yes! My *mother's* father! She didn't like to speak of it, can you blame her? She said she never laid eyes on him! She was *glad* for that! I'm *glad* for her! If I could drain away *his* blood that pollutes *my* body, and pollutes *my* complexion I'd do it! Because I hate every drop of the rapist's blood that's in me![12]

Malcolm recounts in his autobiography the story of a young girl from a New England college who followed him by plane to his New York headquarters after he had spoken in his usual bombastic way at a college meeting. She was terribly upset with his blanket denunciation of everything white. Surely there was *something* a sympathetic white person could do? Nothing, he said, and turned his back on her. Later on, after his own views had changed, Malcolm recalled this incident, and said that he would give anything to be able to speak to that girl again and tell her that he *now* believed there *was* an important role for her to play.

Malcolm's pilgrimage to Mecca (1964) and his realisation that the Islamic faith was truly non-racial had forced him to rethink rapidly his old position. His visit to Algeria shortly after his pilgrimage confirmed his new openness. His hosts impressed upon him how many Frenchmen had laid down their lives fighting for the Algerian cause.

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[11] *Malcolm X Speaks* (An Evergreen Black Cat Book, Grove Press, 1966), p. 197.
[12] *The Autobiography of Malcolm X,* pp. 299–300.

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This new perception on race posed tremendous political problems for Malcolm. Part of his breach with Elijah had been based on his belief of the need for a more aggressive political stance. How could he seem more aggressive if he were now to return to the States and start working with whites? His compromise was to say that although he accepted white allies they could not work in the same organisation as blacks. First there must be black unity, he argued. "The black man has to be shown how to free himself, and the white who is sincerely interested has to back whatever the black group decides to do", he said in a speech in May 1964.[13] White people should realise that the real battle had to be fought within their own communities: changing the attitudes and behaviour of their fellow-whites. It was also the situation where they stood the most chance of being effective. Malcolm felt intuitively what the civil rights organisations were later to admit they found in practice: that sympathetic whites working alongside blacks tend to inhibit black initiative. Given the self-depreciation inculcated in so many blacks in America, white take-overs of multiracial organisations are hard to prohibit, however well-meaning the whites are.

Even in his Muslim days some things forced Malcolm to modify his blind hatred of white society. He admitted that he was impressed that at press conferences European journalists did not press the "hate" question as vehemently as did their American colleagues, *viz.* "Malcolm, do you or do you not hate all white people?"—the stock and rather irrelevant question in any interview with a militant black leader. There was also his relationship with M. S. Handler, the *New York Times* reporter on race relations. Alex Haley, in the introduction to the *Autobiography* remarks that Malcolm's respect for Handler's sincerity and lack of prejudice steadily increased. Haley believes that Handler had a profound influence on the "Inner Malcolm X."

3. Relationship with Africa: Malcolm went on to Africa after his pilgrimage to Mecca in April 1964. Much of the African press welcomed him as a hero. Wherever he went he was wined and dined by presidents and ambassadors. Malcolm was quite overawed by the excitement his presence generated. On a second African trip a few months later—in July—Malcolm was invited to attend the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Conference in Cairo. He submitted an eight-page memorandum to the conference in which he argued that blacks throughout the world should look to Africa for leadership. He wrote: "We also believe that as the heads of independent African states you are the shepherds of *all* African peoples, everywhere, whether they're still at home on the mother continent or have been scattered abroad."

What this pan-Africanism meant in practical terms Malcolm never spelled out in any detail. He certainly rejected Marcus Garvey's wholesale "Back to Africa" ideas although he felt there was a need for American blacks who had technical and professional training to contribute scarce skills to Africa. But he did argue strongly for a cultural and spiritual migration to Africa.

> After lengthy discussions with many Africans at all levels, I would say some would be welcome and some wouldn't be welcome. Those that have a contribution to make would be welcome, but those that have no contribution to make would not be welcome; I don't think any of us, if we look at it objectively, could find fault with that.
>
> And I believe this, that if we migrated back to Africa culturally, philosophically and psychologically, while remaining here physically, the spiritual bond that would develop between us and Africa through this cultural, philosophical and psychological migration, so-called migration, would enhance our position here, because we would have our contacts with them acting as roots or foundations behind us. You will never have a foundation in America.[14]

Malcolm believed that this kind of spiritual association would produce tangible political results. After all, he argued, do not the Chinese scattered around the world find their individual status enhanced by the recent achievements of mainland China? And so a strong and united Africa would win respect for people of African origins wherever they are.

DESPITE ALL THE EXCITEMENT generated by Malcolm on his two visits to Africa, when an opportunity arose for the African leaders to respond to one of Malcolm's suggestions they did not live up to his expectations. He had asked the African leaders at the meeting in Cairo to raise the question of the persecution of American Negroes at the next session of the United Nations. They did not do it, and Malcolm was extremely disappointed. Ironically, the State Department took Malcolm's move more seriously than did the Africans. The *New York Times* carried a report on the State Department's reaction.

> The issue, officials say, would be of service to critics of the United States, Communist and non-Communist, and contribute to the undermining of the position the United States has asserted for itself as the leader of the West in the advocacy of human rights.

[13] *Malcolm X Speaks*, p. 70.
[14] *Malcolm X Speaks*, p. 210.

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Much of Malcolm's Pan-Africanism was often more enthusiasm than real politics. His light-headed account in his *Autobiography* of endless receptions, meetings, and send-offs reveals no understanding of the complexity of international politics and the time it would take in order to get his visionary ideas initiated in practice. "A small motorcade of *5 ambassadors* arrived," he recalled "to see me off!"

Although on this score one can be critical of Malcolm's political naïveté, the criticism should not detract from the obvious psychological and political value Pan-African ideas might have among American blacks if they really took root. After all most American ethnic groups have used their links with their homeland to great political effect, not least the Jews, the Irish, and the East Europeans.

4. Economic Philosophy: In early 1970 Elijah Muhammad gave one of his rare newspaper interviews to the ultra-conservative Chicago daily, the *Chicago Tribune*. In it he bluntly described himself as a "black capitalist", that is, someone who welcomes individual black initiative and enterprise. Although Elijah had never given his economic philosophy a label before, that essentially is what it always had been. Malcolm himself continued to expound Elijah's economic ideas even after he had left the Black Muslims. It was only when he had visited more socialistic countries like Algeria and Egypt that he began to equate racialism with capitalism. "It is impossible for a white person to believe in capitalism and not believe in racism," he said in answer to a question at a public meeting in New York in May 1964. He went on to argue that since most of the newly-independent countries were turning towards socialism this should not be considered an accident. If they felt so strongly about throwing off the capitalist system that had come with colonialism there must be something in it. However, Malcolm never really developed his argument beyond this rather elementary level. There is no indication that he had read Marx or other socialist writers. But he did prophesy in an interview in the *Young Socialist* (March 1965) that Capitalism would Collapse. One is left with the impression that Malcolm was moving towards a fairly conventional left-wing position on economic matters, but that he never had the time or a strong inclination to think out his ideas in any serious way.

5. Political Tactics: In the interview in the *Young Socialist* only a week or so before his death Malcolm made this rather surprising admission: "I still would be hard pressed to give a specific definition to the overall philosophy which I think is necessary for the liberation of the black people in this country." And in a similar vein on the Thursday before his death he told a reporter: "I'm man enough to tell you that I can't put my finger on exactly what my philosophy is now but I'm flexible." Malcolm was clearly in intellectual turmoil right up to the time of his death. Nevertheless there are certain continuous themes in his thoughts that allow one to build up some kind of picture of what he was thinking.

OF ALL THE CONFLICTING CURRENTS of opinion in the fourteen months after his break with Elijah one thing stands out—his desire to have a greater degree of unity with the civil rights organisations. He was even prepared to admit that the cautious establishment-minded NAACP (it concentrated its work in the law courts) was "doing some good." In his biography he argues that Dr King and he had the same goals, only the approach was different.

> The goal has always been the same, with the approaches to it as different as mine and Dr Martin Luther King's non-violent marching, that dramatises the brutality and the evil of the white man against defenceless blacks. And in the racial climate of this country today, it is anybody's guess which of the "extremes" in approach to the black man's problems might *personally* meet a fatal catastrophe first—"non-violent" Dr King, or so-called "violent" me.

Alex Haley himself was convinced that Malcolm had a reluctant admiration for Dr King. Following his return from his visits abroad Malcolm began to give active support to the Voting Rights campaign which was the dominant concern of the civil rights group at that time, although his support (mainly speaking engagements) was limited to the movement's more militant wing, SNCC. The Black Muslims, of course, shunned such activity as it suggested a degree of acceptance of the established political framework. But the right to vote seized Malcolm's imagination. He saw it as a way to bring about a "bloodless revolution". "The Ballot or the Bullet" is the title of the refrain of what many consider his most successful speech. Despite the violent polemic of the speech Malcolm recognises in the course of it the significance of a possible victory by the civil rights movement in its attempt to win legal safeguards for the black vote. And in a speech a few days later entitled "The Black Revolution" he spelt out more precisely what this would mean:

> So, in my conclusion, in speaking about the black revolution, America today is at a time or in a day or at an hour where she is the first country on this earth that can actually have a bloodless revolution. In the past, revolutions have been bloody. Historically you just don't have a peaceful revolution. Revolutions are bloody, revolutions are violent,

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> revolutions cause bloodshed and death follows in their paths. America is the only country in history in a position to bring about a revolution without violence and bloodshed. But America is not morally equipped to do so.
>
> Why is America in a position to bring about a bloodless revolution? Because the Negro in this country holds the balance of power, and if the Negro in this country were given what the Constitution says he is supposed to have, the added power of the Negro in this country would sweep all of the racists and the segregationists out of office. It would change the entire political structure of the country. It would wipe out the Southern segregationism that now controls America's foreign policy, as well as America's domestic policy.
>
> And the only way without bloodshed that this can be brought about is that the black man has to be given full use of the ballot in every one of the fifty states. But if the black man doesn't get the ballot, then you are going to be faced with another man who forgets the ballot and starts using the bullet.[15]

In his biography he spells out the potential power the black vote could have if it were welded into a united force. The arguments deployed today by the increasingly successful black politicians are amazingly similar to those Malcolm was using seven years previously:

> Whenever any group can vote in a bloc, and decide the outcome of elections, and it fails to do this, then that group is politically sick. Immigrants once made Tammany Hall the most powerful single force in American politics. In 1880, New York City's first Irish Catholic Mayor was elected and by 1960 America had its first Irish Catholic President. America's black man, voting as a bloc, could wield an even more powerful force.[16]

IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEN, given his rising expectation of the power of the vote, that Malcolm's views on violence and revolution were somewhat ambivalent. The Black Muslims had always propagated the case for "defensive violence." The traditional submissiveness and passiveness of the Negro in the face of white harassment, (in particular that of the Ku Klux Klan and the police) should give way, they maintained, to a preparedness to stand on firm ground and take counteraction. The amount of fuss that white society made about this position was always rather ludicrous. After all, most people in any society would justify the use of force when waylaid in the street or set upon by a mob. In the autumn of 1971 the British government was giving cautious support to the Protestant vigilante groups in Northern Ireland who believed the Protestant community was vulnerable to wanton IRA violence. Yet this elementary position of the Muslims, coupled with their open hatred of white society, was a cause of much hysteria. To the extent this response was due to the marked and conscious contrast with King's absolute non-violent pacifism some white concern was inevitable; but surely the degree of fearfulness and alarm was principally a racist phenomenon.

Malcolm continued to present this traditional Muslim self-defence position after his break with the Black Muslims. Often he presented it wrapped in a devastating rhetoric—

> It'll be Molotov cocktails this month, hand grenades next month, and something else next month. It'll be ballots, or it'll be bullets. It'll be liberty, or it will be death. The only difference about this kind of death—it'll be reciprocal.[17]

But in fact the context of this quotation is nothing more than the argument of an honest-to-goodness "if-they-hit-me-I'll-hit-them" position. Malcolm summed up his thoughts on "defensive violence" in this passage in his *Autobiography:*

> They called me "the angriest Negro in America." I wouldn't deny that charge. I spoke exactly as I felt. "I believe in anger. The Bible says there is a time for anger." They called me "a teacher, a fomenter of violence." I would say point blank, "That is a lie. I'm not for wanton violence. I'm for justice. I feel that if white people were attacked by Negroes—if the forces of law prove unable, or inadequate, or reluctant to protect those whites from those Negroes—then those white people should protect and defend themselves from those Negroes, using arms if necessary. And I feel that when the law fails to protect Negroes from whites' attack, then those Negroes should use arms, if necessary, to defend themselves."[18]

IT IS FAIR TO SAY that on most of the occasions when Malcolm spoke about violence that was the context within which he saw it being used. But there were occasions in the last year of his life when he did begin to develop the argument for offensive violence—for violent revolution. Even then the arguments were cloaked in some ambiguity. In the second half of "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech he appears to be advocating guerrilla warfare. He pointedly refers to the success of guerrilla movements in Asia and Africa. But then he is careful before the end of the speech to make it clear that he is only advocating the use of the gun "in areas where the government has proven itself either unwilling or unable to defend the lives and the property of Negroes." He in fact admonishes his audience to go no further than this: "So this doesn't mean forming rifle clubs and going out looking for people." Amazingly, he takes an enormous somersault and concludes his highly-charged speech with a warning that if Congress does not end quickly the filibuster over the Civil Rights Bill "a non-violent army" will go down south.

Although in some later speeches he is more

[15] *Malcolm X Speaks*, p. 56–57.
[16] *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, p. 425.
[17] *Malcolm X Speaks* ("Ballots or Bullets"), p. 32.
[18] *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, p. 483.

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specific in his call for violent revolution—at one point in December 1964 he calls for a Mau Mau within the U.S.[19]—the ambiguity never completely disappears. Right up to the time of his death he was still arguing the case for electoral politics—hardly the position of a man who really believes violent revolution is inevitable. Moreover, he never once offered any strategy of guerrilla warfare, nor any tactical argument to suggest how it could operate successfully within the United States.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that Malcolm's ambivalence and seeming lack of direction bothered his supporters. His uncertainty and looseness of thought worked against his image of the militant go-out-and-get-it leader that his appeal was based on. Alex Haley found on a visit to Harlem that criticism of Malcolm was fairly widespread. "In Harlem at large, in the bars and restaurants, on the street corners and stoops, there could be heard more blunt criticism of Malcolm X than ever before in his career", as Haley records in the autumn of 1964.

For all the Black Muslims' faults at least they had some tangible results to show for their activity—their highly successful economic enterprises. Malcolm only had speeches to offer; and so long as his thoughts were vacillating as quickly as they did, it was difficult to put his speeches to any organisational effect. His new organisation had to find a new course—between the Civil Rights organisation and the Black Muslims—a course that would appeal to the bitterness and the frustration of the ordinary man on the street. But once he had toned down his anti-white feelings this became more difficult. One also senses from his burst of candour to Alex Haley about being trapped by his old "hate-and-violence" image that he realised within himself the remoteness of success for offensively violent activity. Yet he realised too that it would betray all those who set store in his leadership if he merely threw his weight behind a conventional civil rights struggle. He had not at the time of his death found a middle road. He spent half of the year 1964 abroad, looking and searching for direction. Inevitably these long visits abroad sapped the morale of even the key members of his organisations; the OAAU was still a very small organisation when he died. And he died without finding an answer to the riddle of how one gives political leadership to those who feel destroyed and betrayed by American society without leading them down the path of futility.

It would, however, be grossly unfair to write off Malcolm X as a political failure. It took tremendous strength of character to turn tail on so many of his old public positions, particularly those concerning his attitudes to whites. Had he lived he would have no doubt deepened his thinking and unravelled many of the conflicting thoughts in his political attitudes. And once the tide of black opinion turned in his favour (as it did in 1966), his leadership of the Black Power movement would have been unquestioned. It is just possible that he would have been able to weld together a kind of radical coalition that would have been both popular and practical. "Black Power" might have had at its head a man whose sensitivity and self-critical awareness would have assured an ongoing political dynamic that, while militant, never lost sight of the larger human situation within which it had to operate.

But this was not to happen. Eight years after his death, seven years after the birth of "Black Power", we can now see how the Black Power Revolt has failed. Blacks are edging back to a Martin Luther King philosophy. A wide spectrum of black opinion, ranging from the Black Panthers rightwards, sees the vote as the key issue. And close behind it is the goal of black economic endeavour. Of course, some of Malcolm's sentiments are still very much alive—Pan-Africanism in particular. Stokely Carmichael and Imamu Baraka (LeRoi Jones) are two very effective carriers of the "more-links-with-Africa" message. And the right of blacks to be politically aggressive and culturally independent is no longer really questioned. But, tragically, the assassin's bullet prohibited us from knowing if Malcolm would have made more of "Black Power" than the young men who stepped into his shoes. My own feeling, for what it is worth, is that if Malcolm X and Martin Luther King had both lived, a multiracial America would have been a profoundly better place than it is today.

[19] *Malcolm X Speaks*, p. 107.

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Michael Burn

Growing up

When I was very young,
Before war came,
In the wake of someone important
I managed to enter the concentration camp
Of Dachau.

To the important person
The Commandant showed politeness,
And also the inmates.
He might have been showing a hospital
For, mostly, professors and artists.
Except they wore convict clothes;
They looked ill in a different way;
They tried to make signs.
"Don't believe," they were trying to say.

At the end he asked,
"Can I show you anything else?"
And I asked what was behind
A row of doors.
When they opened one, out fell a man.
Like a plank.
They pushed him back and shut it.
"Some people" explained the Commandant,
"Have to have special treatment."

That was in Hitler's day.
After the war, under Rakosi,
I had to report a trial.
The accused had been tortured for weeks,
Rehearsed in their confessions,
Then fattened up for the show.
When I got home I was sick.

The night after Dachau
I went to the opera.
The night after the trial
I went to a party.

I've been to other operas,
And to other parties.
About similar trials,
And other places like Dachau,
I have only read since then.

Though I still write about roses and love,
Beautiful people and country,
It would be difficult now to look at the Parthenon
For long, or to walk in a garden,
Without having a vision of somebody falling
And hurriedly slammed back
Between the amber columns,
Or of a line of drugged men
At attention between the flowers.

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Erica Jong

Egyptology

I am the Sphinx.
I am the woman buried in sand
up to her chin.
I am waiting for an archaeologist
to unearth me,
to dig out my neck and my nipples,
bare my claws
and solve my riddle.

No one has solved my riddle
since Oedipus.

*

I face the pyramids which rise
like angular breasts
from the dry body of Egypt,
My fertile river is flowing down below—
a lovely lower kingdom.
Every woman should have a delta
with such rich silt—
brown as the buttocks
of Nubian queens.

*

O friend, why have you come to Egypt?
Aten and Yahweh
are still feuding.
Moses is leading his people
and speaking of guilt.
The voice out of the volcano
will not be still.

*

A religion of death,
a woman buried alive.
For thousands of years
the sand drifted over my head.
My sex was a desert,
my hair more porous than pumice,
and nobody sucked my lips
to make me tell.

*

The pyramid breasts, though huge,
will never sag.
In the centre of each one,
a king lies buried.
In the centre of each one,
a darkened chamber . . .
a tunnel,
dead men's bones,
malignant gold.

Colder

He was six feet four, and forty-six,
and even colder than he thought he was.
JAMES THURBER, *The Thirteen Clocks*

Not that I cared about the other women.
Those perfumed breasts with hearts
of pure rock salt.
Lot's wives—
all of them.

I didn't care
if they fondled him at parties,
eased him in at home
between a husband and a child,
sucked him dry
with vacuum cleaner kisses.

It was the coldness that I minded,
though he'd warned me.
"I'm cold," he said—
(as if that helped any).
But he was colder
than he thought he was.

Cold sex.
A woman has to die
and be exhumed
four times a week
to know the meaning of it.
His lips are razors,
his pelvic bones are knives,
even his elbows could cut butter.

Cold flows from his mouth
like a cloud of carbon dioxide.
His penis is pure dry ice
which turns to smoke.
His face hangs over my face—
an ice carving.

One of these days
he'll shatter
or
he'll melt.

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ART

End of an "Era"

Andy Warhol

By Hilton Kramer

LOOKED AT FROM the vantage point of the early 1970s, the career of Andy Warhol already seems to belong to a distant historical era. The antics of the "Exploding Plastic Inevitable," the mixed-media light show Warhol produced for a New York discotheque—*The Velvet Underground*—in 1965–6, seem as remote from current standards of chic as the pointed-toe shoes the artist once made a handsome living illustrating, and the giddy crowd that once flocked to *The Chelsea Girls* and *Lonesome Cowboys* has since turned to the hard-core pornography of *Deep Throat* for the requisite combination of kicks, giggles, and aesthetic transport. The deadpan paintings of Coke bottles and Campbell Soup cans have now passed into the hands of the museums and the art historians, objects of solemn study on which students take exams and professors promulgate theories. The put-ons of the 1960s are now established classics (and valuable investments), the once ubiquitous celebrity of "the scene" now installed in the modern pantheon as a master.

By the time the Pasadena Art Museum came to organise a Warhol retrospective in 1970—a show that toured the European museums and came to the Whitney in New York a year later—even his fondest admirers had reason to wonder if this phenomenal career had come to an end. "Warhol's career as a painter and even a movie-maker may or may not be over," John Coplans wrote in 1970. "Only the future will answer this . . . like Duchamp, whom he so ardently admired, here is a man who now only speaks when he has something to say."[1]

This concern about a protracted Duchampian silence was, it turned out, premature. In the fall of 1972, precisely ten years after his debut as the coolest of the Pop iconographers, Warhol exhibited a new series of silk-screen portraits of Mao Tse-tung. His timing was, as usual, perfect. President Nixon, it will be recalled, had just succeeded in rendering the benign countenance of the venerable Chairman as familiar and acceptable to the American public as that of Marilyn Monroe or Jackie Kennedy—two earlier favourite subjects of the artist, whose work, as Mr Coplans put it in a characteristic statement, "almost by choice of imagery alone it seems, forces us to squarely face the existential edge of our existence." Chairman Mao had indeed—thanks to the combined efforts of the White House and the mass media—become something of a Pop icon in 1972, and Warhol was quick to see that such an image was now as ripe for aesthetic conversion as Elvis Presley had been a decade before.

At the same time, for the opening of the new Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi, Warhol came up with several other new portraits, one of these of Philip Johnson, who designed the new museum. For this occasion, Warhol also appeared in a short documentary movie, filmed in the architect's offices, doing his now-familiar turn as the art world's lovable idiot-ingénu, speaking in facetious *non sequiturs* and uninterruptedly snapping Polaroid pictures of all those present—the *données*, no doubt, of still more portraits to come. Whether or not he now had "something to say"—whether, alas, he had ever had anything to say—might be argued, but there seemed little danger that Warhol would not continue to be heard from.

STILL, if Mr Coplans was wrong about the Duchampian silence, he was right in suspecting that a significant change had occurred. As an art movement, of course, Pop art had already been in eclipse for several years. Even before the '60s had run its course, the spokesmen most closely identified with Pop's sensational success had begun to adopt a more studied, "historical" view of its accomplishments. Thus, when Henry Geldzahler, the Curator of Contemporary Arts at the Metropolitan Museum (who had been the movement's most visible and energetic booster, even becoming a Pop celebrity himself in the process) mounted his mammoth historical show of *New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940–1970* in 1969, he used the occasion to place a certain distance between himself and his once favourite artists.

> "It seems today that Pop Art was an episode, an interesting one that has left its mark on the decade, and will continue to affect the future, but not a major modern movement which continues to spawn new artists. In fact, just about everything new and original in Pop Art was stated by a few artists in the first years of its existence."[2]

But Pop art, in so far as there was anything "new and original" about it, was, from its very beginnings, always something more than—something a little different from—an art movement. Its principal appeal was never primarily aesthetic,

[1] John Coplans, *Andy Warhol* (1970), p. 52.
[2] Henry Geldzahler, *New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940-1970* (1969), p. 37.

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though it succeeded for a while in effecting a considerable alteration in aesthetic values. Its appeal was social, and its profoundest effect was not on serious art, which it exploited and for a time demoralised, yet left fundamentally unchanged, but on the art public. This it changed to an extraordinary degree. Under the guise of representing the latest "advance" in avant-garde innovation, Pop art actually addressed itself to the largest possible audience—an audience that was suddenly and gratefully relieved of having to deal with all the legendary difficulties that modernist art had always been said to interpose between the public and its ability to accept new artistic vocabularies. In place of complex ideas and hermetic images, of forms that had somehow to be parsed before they could be fully experienced, Pop offered a familiar iconography and a flip, easy irony. Everything in the new art was instantly recognisable, instantly assimilable, and if this were not sufficient to guarantee its immediate success, Pop also enjoyed the advantage of offering this public a kind of revenge on the past, on all that obnoxious seriousness to which it had been obliged to pay lip service in the name of high culture. Now high culture was shown to be just another gag, another put-on, its despised scruples and distinctions an easily penetrated tissue of pretences, and to qualify as a communicant, one now needed little more than a liberated sense of humour and a knowledge (painlessly acquired from the media) of where "it"—the latest thing, the thing that would up the ante in facetiousness and "going too far"—was at.

POP ART was never a mass art, but it nonetheless enlarged the art public as nothing else ever had, bringing to its altered confines larger numbers of the young, the hip, the chic, the newly rich, and the intellectually curious than had ever before been attracted to an art movement. This new audience was not only without serious aesthetic standards but, so far as painting and sculpture were concerned, very largely without any real aesthetic experience. It looked to Pop music, the movies, the world of fashion, and the gossip column—and to the fantasies of fame and sexual privilege spawned in their public legends—for its touchstones of quality and success. It was, in short, an audience thoroughly bemused by the myths of popular culture but differentiated from the mass audience by virtue of its consciousness of its own taste—a taste prepared to embrace whatever trash the juggernaut of cultural fashion might turn up, so long as it could be experienced in a mode of irony.

THIS WAS THE PUBLIC that Warhol understood so well and served so efficiently—the public that he actually helped to create, to the extent that he was the boldest in openly exalting its meretricious tastes, and was, at the same time, created by. He had mastered the intricacies of its peculiar affinities and fetishes in the best training school available—the world of high-fashion publicity, with its corps of professional faddists, its canny retailers, its worship of fame, money, and scandal, and its indispensable alliances with homosexual bohemia. Warhol served a meteoric apprenticeship in this world, becoming the darling of *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*, famous for his irresistible shoe drawings and his Peter Pan personality, before he ever had occasion to apply the valuable experience garnered in its precincts to the more prestigious market for high art.

Many serious artists have resorted to commercial work as a means of supporting their careers, but Warhol's case is different. His art remained essentially the same whether its intentions were explicitly commercial or ostensibly "aesthetic."

129 Die (1962) **Close Cover before Striking (1962)** **A Boy for Meg (1961)**

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What changed was the context—the social environment in which the art was judged and "consumed." And just as Warhol had proved to be a virtuoso in pleasing his commercial patrons, he now demonstrated an uncanny ability to titillate the art audience with his "artless" images of the banal. But he remained throughout this shift from one context to another an illustrator shrewdly exploiting the spectator's expectations. Whereas his subjects had formerly been supplied by clients with products to sell, they were now selected from the commonplaces of popular culture—an art source already certified by the success of the Neo-Dadaists, yet still sufficiently novel to qualify as something new.

There was, if anything, a more personal style at work in the commercial art. As Calvin Tomkins observed in his profile of Warhol, "He could kid the product so subtly that he made the client feel witty."[3] If there was no longer room for the marks of a personal style in the art that launched Warhol as the Prince of Pop—for serious art had already turned away from such emblems of "painterly" sensibility—the strategy was more or less the same. Only, in the latter case, the "product" being kidded—and this time not so subtly—was not Campbell Soup or Coca-Cola but *art* itself, and the client (now the art audience) was made to feel even wittier in recognising the put-on.

Warhol's movies likewise kidded the product—first, movies as such; then, upping the ante, the mythical sex life of the "stars"—and, as before, the timing was shrewd. The surfacing of the counter-culture had already rendered perverse sexuality, drug-taking, *et al.*, familiar topics of the daily press and the nightly television show. Warhol's "dumb" but explicit treatment of such subjects gave the new audience a comfortable way of observing them at a safe "aesthetic" distance and, at the same time, of feeling superior to their trashy inanity. As with his Pop paintings, he was under no obligation to spell out the "significance" of his subject; he had only to identify it. Significance, such as it was, inhered in the mere act of transferring the subject from "life"—which is to say, the media—to "art," and any suggestion of the didactic was, in any case, incompatible with the strategy of kidding the product.

WARHOL HAS NEVER BEEN political, but his art nonetheless stands in relation to museum art, especially the museum art of the avant-garde, more or less as the counterculture once stood in relation to traditional liberalism. It capitalises on its weaknesses, while ruthlessly calling its bluff, and offers its own bluffs as an alternative—the bluffs of immediate gratification.

Yet Warhol, unlike the more radical fringes of the counterculture, has always remained securely within the perimeters of liberal culture, never going beyond the permissible limits of "going too far". He has succeeded in his remarkable enterprise by turning everything he touches, no matter how banal or vulgar or outrageous it may be "in the original," into a form of light entertainment. His "Mao" is, in this respect, no different from his "Marilyn Monroes" and his "Jackies." Only the changed context of the 1970s locates such visual entertainment more readily as a coefficient of what is acceptable to our official culture—the culture that is sanctified by institutions. For it was not, after all, the "existential edge of our existence"—whatever that may be—that Warhol" "choice of imagery" forced us to face but only the superficies of the fashions of the day.

[3] Calvin Tomkins, "Raggedy Andy," in *Andy Warhol*, p. 9.

Large Coca-Cola (1962)

SOURCES: Rainer Grone, *Andy Warhol*, (Thames & Hudson, 1970). Peter Gidal, *Andy Warhol: Films and Paintings* (Vista, 1971). *Warhol* (Tate Gallery, 1971).

Brillo Box (1964)

Colored Campbell's Soup (1965)

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SCIENCE

The Transatlantic Abyss

Of Drugs & Theory

By Henry Miller

PSYCHIATRY IS THE ONLY branch of medicine in which European and American practitioners of equivalent professional stature may find the abyss between their conceptual frameworks so deep as to render communication across the dinner table virtually impossible—a situation unthinkable in cardiology, orthopaedics, or even the more arcane field of immunology. It must be said at once that the difference in clinical practice is likely to be rather less profound than that in ideology and classification. In the United States there are admittedly psychoanalytically orientated practitioners who will deny their patients the tangible benefits of anti-depressant therapy on grounds that seem almost theological, but there are others who are prepared to compromise and allow their patients to enjoy the combined contributions of the couch and the tablet. Similarly the eclectic British psychiatrist whose clinical practice is firmly based on pharmacology is certainly practising psychotherapy unconsciously, even if he can't define it and may even go so far as to deny that it exists.

Nevertheless there is at present a basic difference of general orientation. The founder of modern British psychiatry, Henry Maudsley (a physician after whom our most prestigious English psychiatric hospital is named), wrote in 1870:

> "The observation and classification of mental disorders have been so exclusively psychological that we have not sincerely realised the fact that they illustrate the same pathological principles as other diseases, are produced in the same way, and must be investigated in the same spirit of positive research. Until this is done, I see no hope of improvement in our knowledge of them and no use in multiplying books about them."

These comments are drawn from Maudsley's Goulstonian lectures, delivered annually at the Royal College of Physicians of London by the newly-elected Fellow considered to be of the most outstanding calibre, and they epitomise the basis of British psychiatry in internal medicine that continues to the present day, even though Maudsley's lectures preceded Freud by a quarter of a century.

Indeed, the most important way in which British and most European psychiatry differ from that generally regarded as characteristic of the present-day United States depends on the European clinician's belief that *serious mental illness is not usually due to mental causes.* American psychiatry, on the other hand, especially since the immigration of psychoanalytically orientated therapists in the 1930s, has been dominated by the psycho-therapeutically orientated practice of the office rather than the hospital, and by the neurotic deviation rather than the serious mental illness.

WHAT IS THE PSYCHOTHERAPY upon which so much American psychiatry is ideologically based? It is an attempt to explain mental illness (especially minor mental illness, on which it predictably concentrates its attention) in psychological terms. The psychotherapist—and it is significant that he may or may not be medically qualified, and able or incompetent to distinguish an emotional disturbance from a brain tumour (as in the well-known case of George Gershwin)—offers rather indistinctly defined "professional help" in clarifying the patient's psychoneurotic symptoms and personal problems. He explains them in terms that are plausible in some mutually acceptable frame of reference, communicates convincing optimism, and encourages the patient to make effective choices between the possibilities open to him.

The basic difference is, therefore, between a psychiatry that is based on disturbed cerebral function and biochemistry, and one that is based on psychopathology. The reasons for this are partly historical. Psycho-surgery was initiated by a Portugese surgeon, and electro-convulsive therapy by two Italian psychiatrists—both at a time when the wholesale psychoanalytic takeover of American psychiatry was well under way. Psycho-pharmacology came later and was made a reality by the Swiss chemical industry. But the differences are political as well as technological.

My mentor in medical history at Johns Hopkins University was the sophisticated Swiss polymath Henry Sigerist. He pointed out that any well-heeled sufferer from chronic rheumatism in New York City was likely to be referred to a Park Avenue physician who would treat him with "injections at 25 dollars a shot." His equivalent in the Soviet Union would probably be sent by his Trade Union to a Rheumatology Centre on the Black Sea, where he would be buried daily up to the neck in black mud and regularly pummelled by relays of Amazonian physiotherapists. The chances were that both forms of treatment were quite ineffective, but they neatly illustrated the influence of the prevailing politico-

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economic climate on therapeutic routine as well as on medical practice generally.

SIMILAR CONSIDERATIONS militate today in favour of office as opposed to hospital psychiatry in the great cities of the United States. Conditions in some State mental hospitals encourage this trend even for patients who would clearly be more suitably treated in hospital; and some gifted psychiatrists spend valuable hours wrestling with mildly incommoding fears of spiders instead of using and developing their skills in the treatment of such major clinical disasters as acute schizophrenia. The psychotherapeutic approach is ideally suited to fee-per-service office practice; the indefinite duration of psychoanalysis is exquisitely tailored to it. The analyst can, of course, retort that treatment with electro-convulsion or a bottle of tablets is perfectly fitted to the impersonal machine of a State Health Service, where rare skills are spread thinly over a total population rather than available only to a supposedly fortunate minority.

The models of mental illness that appeal to the European neuro-psychiatrist (and I use the term advisedly, because he must also be a reasonably competent neurologist) are those where a psychosis can be traced to an identifiable metabolic disturbance and improved by its correction. Until the anomalies of nitrogen and ammonia metabolism consequent on liver failure were recognised, the intermittent attacks of mental confusion and "flapping tremor" of the patient with advanced cirrhosis were not unnaturally treated in a psychiatric ward rather than corrected on a metabolic unit. In the same way, although it had already been clearly recognised in the last quarter of the 19th century, the syndrome of profound apathy (often mixed with paranoid depression), that is sometimes encountered in chronic thyroid deficiency, was frequently overlooked in the mental hospital until its rediscovery a few years ago. Similarly, the psychiatric syndromes associated with pernicious anaemia and recurrent haematoporphyrinuria (porphyria) may be coloured to some degree by the individual patient's constitutional psychological make-up and his symptomatology built with the bricks of his previous experiences. But the basis of the disorders is metabolic and they respond not at all to psychological readjustment but only to correction of the biochemical deficiency or anomaly.

NOW THE PRIMARY or constitutional psychoses do not lend themselves to such simple and satisfying explanation. No constant identifiable biochemical abnormality has been verified in schizophrenia or endogenous depression (though there is some suggestive evidence in the latter instance), still less in the chronically and severely anxious patient whose life-long distress and disablement seem so disproportionate to his circumstances. Nevertheless, the natural history of these disorders is such that the "organically" orientated psychiatrist is more inclined to accept hypothetical anomalies of this kind as causal agents than to credit such serious illnesses to "emotional stresses" that are banal and ubiquitous.

This is, in essence, almost a philosophical difference and in any case a difference of emphasis rather than science. Nobody denies that the psycho-physiological shock of bereavement can trigger off an acute depression of "endogenous" psychotic pattern, or that a structural lesion of the left temporal lobe of the cerebral hemisphere may provoke attacks of insanely irrational violence. There then the matter might have remained, had it not been for the steadily growing evidence of the past thirty-five years, showing that the physical methods of treating serious mental illness, which have been increasingly exploited by European psychiatrists, were steadily demonstrated to be better and more predictable in their effects on the patients' symptoms than well-meant but unassessable attempts to remove them by psychological manipulation. Imipramine is more effective in averting depressive suicide than encouragement; phenothiazine is more effective than argument in overcoming schizophrenic hallucinations.

PSYCHO-ACTIVE DRUGS have been employed by man since recorded history began; and, of course, in the Western world alcohol is still much the most important. But psycho-pharmacology, to which modern psychiatry owes its conspicuous successes of the last two decades, could develop only on the infrastructure of a large-scale chemical industry. The time-scale is important. Aspirin was introduced to clinical medicine in 1899—the first of a long and valuable series of barbiturates (Veronal) in 1903—amphetamine (familiar as dexedrine and similar drugs) in 1937, just in time to find a non-medical use in sustaining the alertness of Royal Air Force pilots during the long night-bombing flights of the Hitler war. Electro-convulsive therapy (ECT), introduced by Bini and Cerletti in 1937, soon replaced the drug-induced convulsions that had already been serendipitously found to help the severely depressed patient. Leucotomy, introduced almost simultaneously, passed through a phase of intensive and not always highly critical experimental evaluation before its fairly restricted but sometimes invaluable role was defined. ECT remains a boon to the very seriously and often suicidally depressed patient; and leucotomy (or one of its

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variants) is an irreplaceable last resort in the management of the patient with an uncontrollable tension state resistant to all other forms of treatment.

But of course it is in the treatment of depressive illness especially, and to a less extent schizophrenia, that the progress has been made that has altered the face of clinical psychiatry and the pattern of mental hospitalisation. The anti-depressive drugs represent the greatest advance in medicine since the discovery of penicillin. We owe them to the chemical industry, and the story of their development is one of the most fascinating chapters in medical history.

AMPHETAMINE was the first product of the chemical industry deliberately used for its rather adrenalin-like action to elevate mood. It retains a certain value in combating fatigue (for which it is still often used by medical practitioners themselves) and in mild short depressive episodes or moods. However, its action is too brief and its hangover effect too conspicuous to justify a significant place in routine therapy—especially since dependence may become a problem, and long-term over-dosage can produce a credible pharmacologically-induced imitation of paranoid and hallucinated schizophrenia (even in subjects with no evident predisposition to such illness).

However, conspicuous success in the modern treatment of depressive illness began with the introduction in 1951 of iproniazid as a possible successor to isoniazid in the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis. It was very soon observed that the new drug often produced a remarkable exhilaration of mood, a ravenous appetite, and a rapid increase in weight in those to whom it was administered. A similarly favourable effect was also observed in more than half of a group of patients with depressive illness but without pulmonary tuberculosis to whom it was shortly given. This drug is one of a group of monoamine oxidase inhibitors and was succeeded by a series of such compounds of increasing effectiveness and decreasing toxicity. This in itself represented a remarkable advance, and in 1957 was followed by the introduction of an entirely different kind of anti-depressive drug—imipramine (Tofranil), which is not in itself a monoamine oxidase inhibitor but has somewhat similar action on the chemistry of the brainstem.

Imipramine had been introduced for the treatment of epilepsy and, although it represents the biggest single advance in psycho-pharmacology so far, it is interesting and not uncharacteristic that initial trials in 1950 were unsatisfactory. It was 1957 before its value was recognised, and later still before its very significant effect on depression was demonstrated by the only truly reliable method of the controlled therapeutic trial. It benefits about three-quarters of all patients with true depressive illness, and it has had two further effects on psychiatric thinking. It is of little value in neurotic depression; indeed, like ECT, it can be used as a diagnostic test in cases where the differentiation between endogenous (biochemically determined) depression and neurosis is difficult. Secondly, it has led to more intensive investigation of brainstem chemistry and to a hypothesis that cannot be regarded as proven but is supported by a good deal of circumstantial evidence—that depression is related to a reduced level of noradrenalin in the basal parts of the brain. This level can for example be lowered by the administration of certain drugs that cause depression, among which reserpine, used in the treatment of hypertension, was an outstanding example; and it can be raised by amphetamine, the monoamine oxidase inhibitors, and imipramine and its successors.

THESE NEW DRUGS have had a remarkable effect in shortening depressive illnesses, permitting outpatient treatment by general practitioners as well as psychiatrists, shortening periods of hospitalisation. They have changed the whole picture for the depressive patient, which is of particular importance since this is the commonest of all psychiatric illnesses. The anti-depressive drugs are continually being modified and improved, and one of the most interesting developments in this field has recently come, again from the Swiss firm of Geigy, in the form of clomipramine (Anafranil), which can be given by daily intravenous injection in severe depression. It has a therapeutic effect often as rapid as that of ECT, but without any of the familiar disadvantages of the latter in impairment of memory and concentration. It seems likely that this will further reduce the need for electro-convulsive treatment and hospital admission.

SCHIZOPHRENIA is the most important problem facing psychiatry in every country of the world, and although there is good circumstantial evidence that its basis will be found in some form of genetically-determined biochemical anomaly, conclusive proof in this direction is still lacking. Meanwhile, sufferers from the illness outnumber all others in our mental hospitals, chiefly because the illness is often so lengthy. They occupy something like one-sixth of all our hospital beds.

Argument continues as to whether the condition is a disease or a group of related conditions, and the frequency with which the diagnosis is made varies from country to country. Fortun-

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ately, as is often the case, significant empirical advances in treatment have been made well in advance of real understanding of the nature of the disease. Improved institutional management of schizophrenic patients and increasing attention to community care had led to some improvement in outlook before the introduction of new drugs for the illness. But there can be no doubt that the introduction of the phenothiazines, as Sargant and Slater wrote in 1963, "heralded the clinical revolution that has transformed treatment and medical attitudes. . . ". Especially at a time of active therapeutic research, it is essential that comparative clinical data should be based on patients who would be widely agreed to be truly schizophrenic. This is especially important because there can be no doubt that the diagnosis of schizophrenia is made more often—and on less stringent criteria—in the United States than in Britain.

Most patients require at least short-term admission to hospital for accurate diagnosis and expert assessment, followed up by a period of rehabilitation and in favourable cases by prolonged outpatient care. The first clinical application of the phenothiazines concerned chlorpromazine (Largactil), which was used as an anaesthetic as early as 1950. Two years later, a French clinician demonstrated its remarkable effectiveness in controlling psychotic excitement and aggressive or violent behaviour without evoking the drowsiness and sensory blunting that had complicated their control with the older drugs such as barbiturates or bromides. The phenothiazines have no anti-depressive effect, but they are useful for all varieties of agitation and in all forms of schizophrenia. The more florid the schizophrenic picture, the more striking is the effect. Nearly all patients with acute episodes show some improvement. Nearly half become free of symptoms or very nearly so, losing their hallucinations, delusions, and ideas of persecution as well as their anxiety and agitation. In chronic cases the results are less dramatic, though something like a third can be significantly improved.

The phenothiazines have various toxic effects that may require concurrent treatment with other drugs such as those for the control of Parkinsonian syndromes. However, there can be no doubt whatsoever that they have altered the outlook of schizophrenia and have already had some impact on the demand for long-term hospital beds. The altered pattern of the illness is expressed in the need for more short-term accommodation of acute cases and for a larger number of well-trained psychiatrists whose role is no longer custodial (as it so often was in the past), but predominantly one of accurate diagnosis, expert assessment, and the careful design and evaluation of individual therapeutic routines.

As in the case of depression there has been one very recent major therapeutic development and that is the introduction of fluphenazine (Modecate). One of the great difficulties of managing the untreated chronic schizophrenic is his unreliability in the matter of following up an appropriate therapeutic routine. Many such patients take their drugs very irregularly because of fecklessness and irresponsibility. The virtue of fluphenazine is that it can be given in the form of an injection every two or three weeks and between these visits the patient probably requires no other treatment. This form of management has already yielded very considerable benefit to a large group of chronic schizophrenic patients, especially those outside hospital and in the community.

It is now increasingly accepted in Britain and on the Continent that anxiety is often an endogenous physiological habit rather than an expression of psychological stress. In such cases, which are numerous, treatment with drugs is quicker and more effective than by psychotherapy. Acute panic attacks, for instance, can often be brought under control by the quick-acting amylobarbitone sodium; chronic anxiety by amylobarbitone itself with its more prolonged action. Most psychiatrists feel that these drugs are more dependable in general than the wide variety of more recently fashionable tranquillizers.

The problem of drug dependence rears its head again in this context. But considering the enormous amount of barbiturates consumed by the world population, it is easily exaggerated. The other argument used against the wide use of barbiturates was their employment as agents of suicide. Today, however, the establishment of units for the treatment of poisoning in the major hospitals has reduced the proportion of this problem, since there are few deaths from barbiturate poisoning except where the patient has escaped detection. In fact a more serious threat is now posed by easily accessible aspirin, the toxic effects of which are less reversible.

ALTHOUGH PSYCHIATRY TODAY owes more to the chemical industry than to medicine, and although the interest of psychopathology chiefly concerns the more or less plausible explanation of the patient's symptom-content rather than the nature of his illness, the discipline remains in many ways the most difficult and the most interesting in the whole of medicine—despite (or, perhaps, even because of) the substantial fulfilment of Henry Maudsley's prediction of a hundred years ago.

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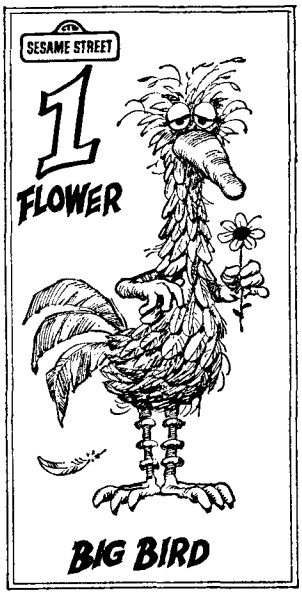
NOTES & TOPICS

Sesame Street



THE SET of *Sesame Street* is a crummy urban courtyard with dustbins on one side, supposed presumably to approximate the environment of the "deprived" inner-city children for whom the programme was originally devised. In spite of this back-drop it has been attacked by some critics as being "too middle class", presenting too favourable a picture of this environment. There are, after all, no junkies to be seen propping up the steps, or winos sleeping in the sun. Instead a casual, friendly young man strolls on with a "Hi, how are you? Welcome to Sesame Street." Other viewers, notably in Germany, have condemned the sordid setting and the fact that one of the characters, a muppet called Oscar the Grouch, actually lives in a dustbin. (Can the influence of Beckett be detected here?) *Der Spiegel,* in a recent article about the programme, deplored the adverse effect this had on one small viewer who would only watch the programme sitting in a bucket, the nearest she could get, I suppose, to a dustbin just her size. All this gives an idea of the range of controversy from left to right that the programme has sparked off since it started in 1969.

Personally I prefer this crummy courtyard to the aseptic, nursery settings of most of the home-grown British series for pre-school children. There are real children to be seen bicycling about in the background, and the cast do manage to create the illusion that some of the characters, besides Oscar, might actually live here. But why should an American young children's programme arouse so much world-wide interest that a leading European news-magazine devotes a cover story to it, and serious educationists get into bitter argument? The next sentence that the young presenter speaks gives you the clue. He'll say, for instance:

"I'm looking for somewhere to paint a great big letter *P.* Hey, I've got an idea, I'll paint it right on your TV screen." *Sesame Street,* while seemingly a programme of pure entertainment with all the racy veneer of a pop commercial, has, in fact, a serious educational purpose.

It started as an experiment to see if the techniques of commercial television could be adapted to the teaching of pre-school children, and was created by the Children's Television Workshop of New York City, a charitable organisation financed by the U.S. Office of Education, Ford and other foundations, under the direction of Mrs Joan Ganz Cooney. In the words of the Workshop's handout:

> The programme concept grew out of an increasing realisation that young children can and do learn much before they begin school. Because children in poverty situations often begin schooling at a level below their middle-class counterparts, a special effort is being made to reach and teach these so-called disadvantaged children through the programme.

The creators have drawn on the continuing advice and expertise of psychologists, teachers, sociologists, so that the research staff are as much involved as the programme-makers. They monitor the effects of each series by observing the reactions of groups of the very children at whom the programme is aimed and alter them in the light of their findings. Such built-in and continuous audience research is incredibly costly, and *Sesame Street* must be the only programme in the world able to afford this kind of expense. It is the close links with research that make the programme so effective. Each series follows a specific curriculum that emphasises "pre-reading skills, numbers, reason and problem-solving, and body parts and functions." It includes "Ecology, Spanish bilingual and bi-cultural elements, and work in the areas of co-operation and conflict resolutions."

The human beings in the programme include an ethnic mixture of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Whites. In a paper put out by the Workshop's Research Department the instructional goals of the programme are listed in great detail. I. Symbolic Representation—that is the recognition of letters, numbers, geometric forms and the ability to do simple things with them. II. Cognitive Processes (with five sub-headings). III. Physical Environment. IV. Social Environ-

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ment. Each programme is an hour long and consists of a medley of about 40 separate items, structured like a variety show with songs, cartoons, funny men, puppets, satirical sketches, short film sequences, stories, each item being designed to further one of the instructional goals. Laid on the line like this the whole concept sounds vaguely sinister, a kind of Big Brother brainwashing technique to condition children into the right responses; and some educationists have reacted against it for this reason—notably John Holt (the American author of *How Children Fail* and *How Children Learn*) who has criticised it for helping children "get better at the task of pleasing first-grade teachers." It is, obviously, carefully structured and specific in its aims of teaching children, and one of the debates is about whether this is a legitimate function for a programme for pre-school children. If it helps children from poor homes to learn to read and catch up generally on their middle-class schoolmates when they start school (instead of being two years behind them), then I for one think it is.

ACCORDING to an independent research organisation in the USA, "Educational Testing Service," who have made several surveys to measure how far the programme is achieving its educational goals, it has been an undoubted success. One group whose scores improved strikingly were Spanish-speaking children. ETS concluded that "3-5-year-olds from a variety of backgrounds acquired important simple and complex cognitive skills as a result of watching the programme. Those who watched the most gained the most". The audience for the series is about *eight million* children—there are 12 million U.S. children in the target age of three-, four- and five-year-olds—as it is broadcast daily on about 260 stations, twice daily on some. Not only is the programme widely popular in the USA but since it won the 1970 *Prix Jeunesse* it has been snapped up by about 30 other countries.

The fact that it is shown so widely can, in English-speaking countries, be put down to its original and successful formula. But I would suspect that in some other places which are too poor to spend any money on making their own children's programmes, *Sesame Street* is welcomed partly as a subsidised import that will fill up viewing time. It is the policy of the Children's Television Workshop to make it available at a low cost to developing countries. Some people have even seen this as a new and subtle form of American pedagogical imperialism. It must certainly have done something for the American image in these countries; surely the picture it presents of an integrated, harmonious, multiracial community is hardly accurate.

AN INTERESTING CONSEQUENCE has been the decision of several countries to make their own versions of *Sesame Street*. The CTW do not allow the programmes to be dubbed, but they do encourage and assist people to remake the series using their own presenters, localising the material, and highlighting those items that fit in with the country's own educational goals. At a seminar in South America, for instance, it was decided to emphasise "cleanliness and co-operation." Both Spanish and Portuguese versions have been made for Latin America. The Germans are currently showing their own version of *"Sesamstrasse"* where opinion is exuberantly divided about it—children being in favour and some educationists against because "in Germany learning and laughing have never gone together, work and play have always contradicted each other" and they are suspicious of the "calculated wild psychedelic turmoil" *(Der Spiegel)*.

THE FIRST I HEARD OF the series, like most people in Britain, was when the BBC decided in 1970 against showing it, and Miss Monica Sims, Head of Children's Programmes, explained their reasons. In her view

> *"Sesame Street* is an outcome of a philosophy of ever-available 'wall-paper' TV programming. American children watch television for hours on end. In all the programmes we make for British children we set out to discourage passive box-watching; our aim is to provide an imaginative and intellectual stimulus and to encourage creativity and activity. . . . "

She was brave enough to say: "We believe we can make better programmes for British under-fives than *Sesame Street*." She considered that the programme was "geared to the needs of disadvantaged children in the United States and properly reflects the society in which they live" and that the "underlying social, philosophical and educational differences . . . would make, *Sesame Street* inappropriate in the mixed diet of children's programmes we provide every day." No such moral scruples have prevented the BBC showing a great many other American imports such as *Banana Splits, Tom and Jerry, Boss Cat, Wacky Races,* etc.

Such a rejection inevitably aroused people's curiosity and a great deal of press comment; and the discussion has been going on ever since as to whether *Sesame Street* should get a proper daily showing here. In 1971 the ITA (Independent Television Authority) Schools Committee agreed that the series should be shown on a trial basis on the conditions that *(a)* the transmissions were monitored to discover children's, parents' and educationists' reactions, *(b)* that the ITA staff should make it clear that the Committee

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regarded the educational validity of *Sesame Street* for British children as an open question, and *(c)* that the Committee wanted a British series to be produced eventually. What caution!

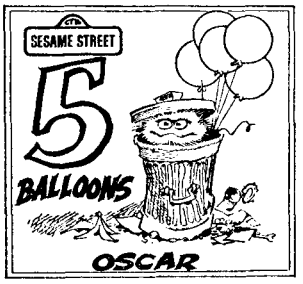
Frank Blackwell of the National Council for Educational Technology was in charge of the research and produced a fascinating report in June 1972 called "Reactions to *Sesame Street* in Britain." After the first showing the reactions were: infant school and play-groups mainly in favour, nursery teachers against, and parents enthusiastically for. The second showing was monitored in more detail, and it is interesting to note that the elements in the programme that some educationists have particularly disliked—namely the direct teaching of letters and numbers—were particularly appealing to parents.

The most serious argument in favour of showing the programme nationally, and on a daily basis, is that only about 10% of our British 3-4 year olds are involved in pre-school education. It is not the children at "play groups" or nursery schools that need stimulus. They are the privileged minority that are already getting it (and, of course, far more in the middle-class than in poorer areas). What of the other 90% of children? Especially the ones that Sir Alec Clegg describes in his book *Children in Distress* (1970) where he quotes an infant-school head-teacher as saying:

> "We have children starting school for whom the words *1, 2, 3, 4, 5* represent a new language, children who are so unawakened to the world around them that the meaning of the colour words *red, blue* etc, is not known. . . . "

THE DEBATE about *Sesame Street* is part of a much wider debate about the importance of pre-school stimulus to children's learning. Undoubtedly if such children had had the opportunity of watching *Sesame Street* daily they would not only be able to count up to 10, they would also recognise triangles and squares and know the meaning of such tricky words as *above, behind, between.*

Item from *Sesame Street:* "I'm Herbert the Frog. I'm here to tell you all about another great groovy word. Here it is—*Between.*" (His whole approach is a sophisticated spoof of a commercial.) He then proceeds to demonstrate the word by putting on the table a record of *The Beatles,* on top of that a doughnut, on top of that a ping pong ball. Along comes a monster and eats the ping pong ball and the doughnut. Frog hides under the table and says "There's only a record *between* me and that monster."



IN QUITO, *the Cookie Monster gobbles tacos. Big Bird is Bibo in Hamburg and Garibaldo in São Paulo. In Latin America, Oscar the Grouch has left his garbage can to become Paco, the opinionated parrot, in Mexico City and Gugu, a cantankerous (but good-hearted) junk collector in Rio de Janiero.*

"Sesame Street," in a word has gone international.

The American version alone is being viewed in nearly 50 lands, from Antigua to Zambia, from Pago Pago to Poland. More recently, three distinct foreign versions have appeared as "Plaza Sesamo" for Spanish-speaking pre-schoolers, "Vila Sésamo" in Portuguese and "Sesamstrasse" in West Germany.

The English version, produced by the nonprofit Children's Television Workshop in New York, became a hot export item soon after it went on the air in 1969.

VIEWERS **of "Sesami Storito" in Japan buy 100,000 booklets with translations of the English soundtrack every two weeks. The Spanish version produced in Mexico City, allows for the fact that it takes about 30% longer to say something in Spanish than it does in English, "Plaza Sesamo," also omits "Sesame Street's" stress on learning the alphabet in favour of teaching whole "sight words" that children can learn through repetition and memorization.**

THE GERMAN *"Sesamstrasse" goes much further in trying to shape a young viewer's approach to society. One-third of each show is devoted to "social learning," through a complex series of skits, cartoons and documentary films that officials at the Children's Television Workshop here believe are intended to encourage young Germans to "question authority to test the validity of authority."*

Norton Wright, the Children's Television Workshop producer, asked the Germans, "But you don't have black people with Afros—how will it relate to German youth?"

"They said, 'Well, we don't have a street with a big bird running around in it either.' "

The Germans added that the influx of dark-skinned foreign workers from southern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East made "Sesame Street's" integrated cast and emphasis on racial harmony as useful as "an integrated learning experience" for youngsters in Hamburg as it was for pre-schoolers in New York.

One 6-year-old in Israel not long ago was asked if he had learned any English words from the program.

"Yes," he replied, " 'S' and 'E'."

NEW YORK TIMES

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One of the great advantages of *Sesame Street* over all the other pre-school programmes is that it has a built-in appeal to adults and older children. A mother watching it might well catch on to the idea of playing verbal games with her children. She would surely share their pleasure in the zany humour and absurd situations. As the ITA report said, there are many people who find it "livelier, more modern and less class-conscious than existing British series and certainly more humorous. . . ." I am among them. Unfortunately, the Schools Committee of the ITA decided by a slim majority *against* including the programme as part of the education output. This did not mean banning it altogether (luckily their power did not extend that far), but it did mean it then had to fight its way into the schedules along with all other "foreign material" for which there is a strict quota agreed with the trade unions. The result has been that it is broadcast only on Saturday mornings at 10 o'clock on a few networks—and its real value, which lies in seeing it daily, with all the benefits of frequent repetition of specific learning items, has been lost.

One hopeful outcome of the whole episode has been that the commercial companies have been stimulated into broadcasting their own series for pre-school children daily at 12.05. They have picked up a lot of technical ideas from *Sesame Street* including using moppets as some of the main characters, but they are in no sense trying to teach children as *Sesame Street* does. The programmes are only 15 minutes long and *Rainbow*, the current Thames series, bears no comparison with *Sesame Street*. It has none of the imagination, wit, or stimulus. Of course the BBC has had its own pre-school programmes—not longer than 15 minutes—for more than twenty years, starting with *Watch with Mother* and adding *Play School* ten years ago. *Play School* which when it started had something new to offer, now seems a bit dated and stale with too much emphasis on cuddly young men pretending to be windmills.

I would like to see *Sesame Street* given its own place in the daily scheduling so that British viewers could judge and compare for themselves and make their preferences known to the IBA. Television can never be a substitute for the real-life interaction of good play groups and nursery schools; but it will be years before most children ever have the chance of benefiting from them. Meanwhile the pre-school years are increasingly regarded as playing a vital part in the educational attainment of a child. There is, of course, argument about whether or not it's a good thing to teach children "cognitive skills" before they go to school. The accepted Piaget view was all against it, but falling standards of literacy in schools and the special needs of what has become known as the "Educational Priority Area" child—who (in A. H. Halsey's words) "will never be rid of the educational handicap he bears at five years of age"—are making people question this. In recent EPA projects several language-development experiments were tried out effectively with young children, largely based on American work in this field. The problems of our underprivileged children (among whom must be numbered many immigrants), are not *so* very different from those of their American counterparts. In this country too, since the de-restriction of television hours, small children now watch the telly for hours on end. "Wall-paper TV" is a reality. Surely it would be worth while to offer them something more substantial than the fifteen minutes they get at present from the commercial TV companies and the two 15-minute programmes from the BBC?

WAS IT A TOUCH OF XENOPHOBIA that made the BBC and the ITA Schools' Committee turn down *Sesame Street* for reasons that seem more related to the internal concerns of the educational establishment than the urgent needs of underprivileged children? It seems short-sighted to reject a series specially designed to reach the children most in need when we are barely beginning to tackle their educational problems ourselves. Perhaps we should admit that, at the moment, this is something that the American "Children's Television Workshop" does better than anything we Europeans are doing, and go on to take advantage of the outstanding skill (and money) that has gone into the preparation of the remarkable *Sesame Street.*

Sasha Moorsom

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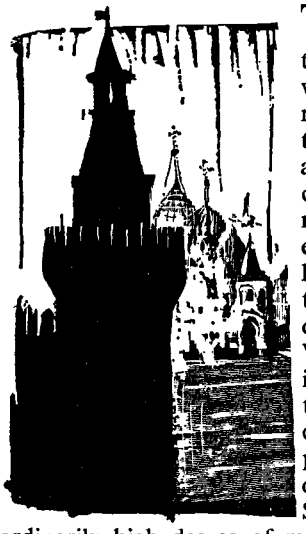
Andrei Sakharov Reconsiders

An Interview with the Russian Scientist in Moscow



THERE WAS A TIME when I thought I knew what socialism meant; then I began to have my doubts and began to wonder whether it is any more than an empty word which has its uses only in the propaganda of official politics. What is overpowering in our society is the unprecedented concentration of political and economic power in the State, the extraordinarily high degree of monopolisation. One can indeed speak—as Lenin did after the Revolution—of State Capitalism, since it is the state which controls the entire economy.

And the meaning of this is, simply, that socialism has brought nothing new. It merely represents the most extreme form in the development of capitalist society, as we know it in the USA and other Western countries—only that our monopoly control is much more extensive. So there should not be anything very perplexing about the fact that we have rather the same kind of problems as the capitalist world: criminality and alienation. The difference is that our own society represents an extreme case: with maximum unfreedom, maximum ideological inflexibility, and (this is its special distinction) the maximum claim to be the best society, which of course it is not by any manner or means.

—What, in your view, is the greatest deficiency of Soviet society?

SAKHAROV: Probably the lack of liberty in a bureaucratised authoritarianism which functions so irrationally and with such class egoism that its only real function is to keep the existing system going and to cover the great abuses all around us with an appearance of respectability. I have already written about this, and it is surely clear to all attentive observers that what is "social" about our society is basically for the sake of appearances, for show, and is essentially superficial rather than real and factual. This is as true for the educational system as for the national health service. How many times have I heard visitors from the West say: "Your society has many faults, but nevertheless you can get free medical attention. . . ." But fundamentally, of course, it isn't an iota more "free" than in most of the Western countries; indeed it is, properly reckoned, very expensive; and more than that its average level of professional service is very low. As for the educational system it is in an unfortunate state of affairs, and the teachers find themselves very badly off. . . .

—Do you believe, then, that Soviet society today is a class society?

SAKHAROV: It is a society which is marked by a high degree of inequalities, although these may not be associated with what is called "class structure." It is a society with its own peculiarities.

—But are these marked by forms of injustice?

SAKHAROV: Injustice, yes, in many respects. Injustice, for example, in the relations between the people in the cities and the people on the land. The *kolkhoz*-farmers have no official passes, which means that they are formally bound to their own places, to their *kolkhoz* which they may not leave unless they receive permission from their superiors (but this is given most of the time). There are also injustices and inequalities among the various sections of the nation, with Moscow and other large cities being privileged with regard to goods, everyday comforts, cultural life, etc. The passport-system cements these divisions, this territorial inequality. . . .

—But you, Andrei Dmitryevich, have said yourself that you are among the very privileged?

ANDREI SAKHAROV *is the distinguished Russian nuclear physicist, a Stalin prizewinner ("the father of the Russian H-bomb"), and the outstanding student of the Soviet Nobel Prizewinner in physics, Dr Igor Tamm. In 1968 he published his famous "Memorandum" to the Supreme Soviet and subsequently established, without official approval, an organisation "for the Establishment of Civil Rights in the U.S.S.R." The Sakharov Memorandum was translated into many languages, and there is an English edition "Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom", André Deutsch and Penguin (London), Norton (New York). An additional manuscript was published in* Survey *(London, Summer 1972). This interview with* PROFESSOR SAKHAROV *was conducted in Moscow by a representative of the Swedish Radio.*

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SAKHAROV: Yes, and I still am, taking the line of least resistance. But I used to be among the super-privileged when I worked in the top levels of our war industries and had, according to Soviet standards, an enormous income and premiums.

—What priorities do the members of the Party have in the Soviet Union?

SAKHAROV: They enjoy a great number of privileges, for example, in our system of sanatoriums and throughout the health service. Through their "connections" they enjoy special rights when it comes to jobs and to promotion. All the leading positions of any consequence, say factory managers or chief engineers, are open only to Party members, and there are only rare exceptions. There is a very close relationship between Party membership, position in the Party hierarchy, and place in society. And beyond that there is almost a tradition of personnel transfers: once you've been in a leading position, when you leave you go on to a similar post with similar material advantages. The whole system of personal advancement is intimately connected with the network of "mutual connections" within the hierarchy. To every leading functionary is attached a whole group of persons and they move along with him, on transfers from station to station. This has almost become inevitable and inescapable, a kind of new law within the state system. In this way a new Group has grown up, a special and isolated élite. This is the major "non-material" privilege. Indeed one can say that we now have a Party which strongly resembles the kind of "Party" Orwell was writing about.

From a material point of view the Party people have many benefits. Occasionally there are even wage-bonuses (in special envelopes), and special methods like these come and go. In many places there are camouflaged distribution networks where consumer goods are better and cheaper, and there one can get more over the counter for one's rouble than the average man can elsewhere. Consequently one can't really get a true picture of the effective wage from the simple official statistic.

—Can anything be done about all this?

SAKHAROV: What one *should* do and what one *can* do—these are two quite different things. I believe that one can't really do anything about it because the system is very heavily weighted in its own favour. The more unfree a system is, the more conservative it is.

—Do forces on the outside have any influence?

SAKHAROV: We don't know exactly what the true attitudes of the outside world are. It is possible that everybody on the outside simply accepts all our rules of the game, and this would be un-

*The Prospects of Socialism (cont'd)**

THE HALF-BAKED PROPOSAL *to nationalise 25 of the 100 largest companies, without explanation or justification, has had its predictable result. According to* The Times *and the Opinion Research Centre, it was one of the factors responsible for giving the Tories their first lead in the opinion polls for over two years. And it can hardly have helped in Thursday's vital local elections.*

The proposal has damaged Labour in three ways. First, it has distracted public attention from a series of events which should have been disastrous for the Tory Government: another 10% rise in house prices in the first quarter of this year, a further sharp rise in food prices, an open threat to mutilate the railway system, the Lonrho affair, and so on.

Secondly, it guaranteed an almost total neglect of the whole of the rest of Labour's new programme. The Press inevitably seized on this one single proposal to the exclusion of all else, and so a blanket of silence descended on all the other proposals in the document—on tax reform, land policy, housing, education, the social services, and the rest. This is a tragedy; for the document generally—though it is glaringly weak on the environment, in which the National Executive Committee appears to take no interest—is one of the most constructive that the Party has yet produced.

Thirdly, we risk deceiving the public. Nationalisation is not an end in itself. The basic socialist ends are greater equality, social justice and democracy; and nationalisation is one possible means of furthering these aims. But it does not *automatically* further them. It does not in itself engender greater equality, more jobs in the regions, higher investment or industrial democracy. The public knows this perfectly well, and so do the workers who have suffered from pit closures, steel redundancies and the run-down of the railways. It is idiotic to try to bamboozle them.

So each proposal for public ownership must be justified to the electors in terms of the actual, positive benefits which it will bring. Where the proposals are well thought-out, this is not a difficult

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*FOR PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS, *see the articles and documents by Richard Lowenthal, "What Prospects for Socialism?" (*ENCOUNTER, *January); Roy Jenkins, "Improvement or—Smash?" (May); Hans Heigert, "Letter from Germany" (May).*

Anthony Crosland's remarks were made in June in a speech to the Labour Party at Rotherham. He was Minister of State for Economic Affairs, Secretary of State for Education and Science, and President of the Board of Trade in Harold Wilson's Government (1964–1970). He is the author of "The Future of Socialism" (1956) and of "The Conservative Enemy" (1962) which included many of his previous articles in ENCOUNTER.

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unfortunate.[1] On the other hand, the fact that our 50-year isolation is beginning to be broken through may well in time have positive results. It is very difficult to predict how things will develop. But in each case of "help from the outside" we must ask ourselves: is this a matter of authentic assistance, or a stratagem for Western advantage in which *we* are only playing the role of small-change.

—And what of the various forces inside the Soviet Union?

SAKHAROV: Within the U.S.S.R. certain changes are indeed taking place, but they are so invisible, so hidden, that it is difficult to establish their proportions. One must realise that in so gigantic a State as ours things can never happen in a regular or uniform fashion, and given the lack of information and contacts between various groups of the population one can hardly grasp what, if anything, is being transformed. We know that the nationalist tendencies in the outer area of our land are very strong, but it is difficult to say in each case whether they are "positive" or not. On occasion, for example, in the Ukraine these tendencies are intimately connected with the movement towards democratisation, and also in the Baltic provinces where the religious and the nationalist feelings are intermingled with democratic demands. It could be that in other areas this is not the case; we know so few details.

—It seems that you are very doubtful, although. . . .

SAKHAROV: I am very doubtful about the whole of socialism! I just don't have the conviction any more that the theory of socialism has been able to offer us anything new for the organisation of a better society. To be sure, one can find here and there elements for some hopeful variation, but by and large the development of our own state has produced more destructive than positive features. What has proved positive is more properly ascribed to the all-too-human element which persists in all societies, and so is not really a virtue of this system but would also have emerged in other circumstances.

Taken together the achievements are indeed not so inconsiderable, but in our special situation they were associated with so much political warfare, with so many hard, cruel and destructive forces, that we now have the highly regrettable social consequences: exhaustion, apathy, cynicism. We will be cured of these, if at all, only with the greatest difficulty. Again, one can't know from the inside what the pattern of future change will be. Perhaps it's easier to discern from the outside, but then you must look at things without prejudice.

—You have your doubts, then, whether it will be possible to make any kind of corrections to the present Soviet system? And yet you yourself are active, are always issuing declarations. Why?

SAKHAROV: I have always had the need to be clear about one's ideals, to live with them, even when it appears impossible to find any direct way to realise them. If there were no ideals there would be no hope, only darkness, despair, dead-ends.

[1] ED. NOTE: As *The Observer* reported (22 July 1973), "Two weeks ago, Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov and two other members of Moscow's unofficial Human Rights Committee sent a bitterly reproachful message to the West.

'An international conference of psychotherapists in Oslo had refused appeals to condemn the Soviet practice of declaring political dissenters insane and imprisoning them in special psychiatric hospitals. The reason given for the refusal was so as not to hinder 'the currently most progressive process of *rapprochement* with the countries of Eastern Europe.'

'Sakharov and his colleagues commented: 'To close one's eyes to such cruelties means to encourage their perpetration and betray their victims. Repression through psychiatry not only cripples people's lives, it destroys the moral and legal foundations of human society. Where will the forces be found to combat this danger if even doctors desire neither to hear nor to speak of it?'

'Detailed evidence of the practice has been collected in this country by a small working group of psychiatrists and laymen. . . . But the response of psychiatric organisations in the West has been timid. . . .'

—*Nationalisation?*

task; for the prejudice against sensible nationalisation is much weaker than it was 10 years ago. Thus we shall have no difficulty in justifying to the hilt the excellent proposals on land, the ports, shipbuilding, North Sea oil, private rented property. What we cannot justify is a blanket threat to every large firm in Britain—good or bad, socially responsible or not, progressive or reactionary—based on the misleading assumption that a change in ownership of itself will produce miraculous results. Each case must be argued on its merits.

AFTER THE ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS *of the last weeks, the Party must now return to sanity. We are wholly agreed on our basic aim—a more equal distribution of wealth, power and privilege. This can be achieved by a variety of different means—educational reform, housing policy, social services, tax changes, subsidies, government controls, legislation, municipal action, as well as more public ownership. A Labour Government must and will use all these means; and its educational and housing policies, totally forgotten in the excitement of the last ten days, will be at least as important as nationalisation. For socialist policies must not only be, they must also be* seen *to be, relevant to the day-to-day lives of the people we seek to represent.*

C. A. R. Crosland

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Moreover, we can't really tell whether or not there will be genuine opportunities in the future for cooperation between our country and the outside world. If not for a few signals to the effect that all is not well with us, then even the most modest chances will slip by and nobody would even know that there is a *need* to change things.

And there is also the point that the history we have gone through should serve as a warning to the West and to the Third World—a warning to avoid in their development certain grievous errors which we have committed.

You see, one can't really conclude that a man has hope simply because he doesn't remain silent. He can be quite without any hope whatsoever and still speak out, because it is impossible for him to keep his peace. In almost every specific case which the Press takes up, it is so that we no longer expect anything to come of it. Experience has convinced us that whatever result comes of it all is never practical, never concrete.

—What would you like to do, how would you like to be active?

SAKHAROV: Well, what I had on my mind I recorded in my Memorandum of 1968 and especially in the postscript to the Supreme Soviet.

One should however, make a number of reconsiderations. For example, the whole Chinese question was dealt with by me in a tone which I would not use today; and perhaps I wouldn't even take the matter up at all today, since I still do not comprehend the meaning of our China policy, and to say nothing might be wiser. Today I would no longer charge the Chinese with aggressiveness; in my Memorandum things were said none too clearly although I did then speak of a "Chinese threat." China is in a period of change (we ourselves also went through it) less with the welfare of the citizenry in mind than with the need to assert herself politically, at home and abroad.

—Are you suggesting that socialism has failed to prove itself in the case of Soviet Russia? Do you believe that the whole system would have to be changed, or could reforms and improvements be made within the system?

SAKHAROV: This is a question that presents too many difficulties for me. It is inconceivable to effect a complete transformation of a whole society, for there must always be a connection between what was and what will be. Changes must be taken step by step, otherwise we will be undergoing again that unspeakable destructiveness which we have suffered more than once before. I am a gradualist, a supporter of piecemeal changes.

—What must be done first and foremost?

SAKHAROV: What must be done? I have to acknowledge that our present system out of its own inner force or momentum tends to do nothing, or very little. What is necessary is the liquidation of the fanatical ideologisation of society.

—Why, and how?

SAKHAROV: The very structure of ideology, and by its nature it is undemocratic, has had tragic consequences for our society. Isolation from the outside world and the loss of the right to travel abroad and to return home have had the most ruinous effect on our life here. It has been an endless misfortune for all those who from personal or from ethnic motives have wanted to leave; but it also has a tragic element for those who want to remain, for a land which one cannot freely leave and return to is something short of a true homeland. It becomes a closed society and in it everything proceeds differently than in an open society.

—About the right to leave. . . .

SAKHAROV: Yes, that is a most important condition, and also the right to return.

—And the other conditions?

SAKHAROV: In our society the complete system of State socialisation has hindered the development of any kind of personal initiative in so many areas where it could have been effective and successful, not only in the big industries where perhaps state direction is needed. The narrowing of such initiative and freedom has negative effects on the living standard and also makes life so much more boring and melancholy than it need be. This is a hard fact for our consumers, for our administrative services, for our schools and our hospitals. We can't help but move forward if there were the slightest relaxation in the whole monolithic structure. The Party's monopoly of state control has reached such proportions that even the controllers have come to the conclusion that it is all to no purpose, that real government is ineffectual.

What, then, is needed? More publicity, more openness, a public view into the workings of the state apparatus. Probably a one-party system is much too inelastic. Even in a socialist economy it would be possible to have a multi-party system, and even in the People's Democracies there are signs of it, even if in almost parody form. We need to have general elections (without too many candidates being put up), plus a number of measures each of which may not be very effective, but taken together contribute to fissures in the monolithic block. The Press must also be reformed, for the newspapers today are so uniform that they have lost almost completely their function as media of information. In the event that certain facts do find their way into the newspapers, they can be understood only by those who are already in the know; and essentially

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they serve only to distort a picture of life as it is lived in our land.

As for intellectual life, it simply does not exist, so there is nothing to be distorted. The role of the intelligentsia in our society is repressed in the most senseless fashion. Most intellectuals are badly off, and share with workers a low living standard; neither can be compared with their Western counterparts. Oppressed and depressed, the intellectuals have also to suffer a certain anti-intellectual atmosphere; and occupations which require an educated, cultured background (such as the teaching profession) do not enjoy the respect they deserve. In an anti-intellectual atmosphere we find, more and more, a tendency towards a narrow professional specialisation or, in other cases, a kind of double-life between home and work. People learn to "think differently" in each place, and this split-level thinking leads to hypocrisy, to both a moral and creative decline. It is worse for the man of culture than for the technician; culture appears to him as a dead-end. Literature, for example, is grey, official, ceremonial: in a word, boring.

—Haven't you ever had, during these years when you have been so active, personal fears about your health or your freedom?

SAKHAROV: No, not especially. For myself I have never been afraid, but that is probably due to my own special temperament and perhaps also to the fact that I have moved on from a special and rather high position in society where, presumably, reason for such anxiety is not supposed to be present. At the moment I have the greatest concern not for myself but for my family and the relatives of my wife. This is the most serious matter we have before us. We know the case of Veniamin Levitch whose son has just been taken, and that's the way these things are done.

The Intellectual as Lunatic

BY COURT ORDER *of the authorities in Kiev the mathematician Leonid Plyushch has now been confined indefinitely to a "special" lunatic asylum. The decision was based on the charge that the Ukrainian scholar has been suffering from schizophrenia and "a mania about reform ideas." This represents a further stage in the campaign of repression against civil-libertarians in the Soviet Union which had previously reached its climax with the arrest and commitment of Soviet General Grigorenko. The secret trial in Kiev had excluded any public notice or participation. Various efforts on his behalf from friends and colleagues were not accepted. Not even Plyushch's wife could testify for him.*

Plyushch's views were those of a pacifist, a liberal, and an internationalist in the widest sense. He was born in 1939, lost his father in 1941 in the first defence against the Hitler invasion. His widowed mother had great difficulties maintaining the family under the harsh Nazi conditions imposed by Reichskommissar Erich Koch. As a result of malnutrition and subsequent bone-tuberculosis, Leonid Plyushch became crippled, and was hospitalised for many years. Weak in body, his mind proved strong enough to acquit himself with honours in his studies. After his degree in mathematics from the Kiev University, he became a member of the Institute of Cybernetics of the Academy of Science; and the young scholar seemed to be headed, as the Academy prophesied, for a distinguished career.

His career was interrupted in 1969. He became a member of the dissident group advocating Civil Liberties in the USSR, and played an increasingly active role in the defence of political prisoners. Unlike many of the Ukrainian resistance fighters, he was known as a liberal who declined to make "nationalistic" distinctions, and this made him an especially popular figure among Jews, Poles, and Crimean Tartars, as well as the Russian minority in the Ukraine. This libertarian breadth to his role and activity made him a special target for the police.

He was first expelled from the Academy of Science. He was forced into a hopeless unemployment, since he was incapable of physical labour, and was even dismissed from a job as a night-watchman. The discriminatory measures also involved his family, and his wife lost her position as a school-teacher. Finally, the misery was compounded by the action of the police on 14 January 1972. The scholar was arrested by the KGB, badly treated in the Kiev central prison, and then transferred to Moscow where he was committed to the notorious Serbski Institute of Psychiatry. Evidently he still had not yet been "broken down", and was returned to Kiev to stand trial.

THE KGB DOCTORS IN MOSCOW *had certified that he was a schizophrenic who was suffering from delusions described as "manic reformism." In Kiev the local KGB tried to obtain further "evidence" from both his mother and his wife to the effect that the son and the husband had always had schizophrenic traits. This failed. On the other side colleagues at the University and the Academy failed to get permission to submit their evidence of his "rationality."*

In the old Tsarist days there was a case of a political oppositionist who was committed as a "lunatic"; but nowadays it is done regularly with special "scientific" inquisitors and a political ruthlessness which makes the repression even more horrific.

According to information emanating from civil-libertarian circles in the USSR, Russians now hope that enlightened Western liberals, now that they have more time on their hands after the ending of the Viet Nam war, will be in a position to take up the cause of such victims of political crimes as Leonid Plyushch.

NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG

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BOOKS & WRITERS

"Sincerely, Lionel Trilling"

By John Holloway

Sincerity and Authenticity consists of the Charles Eliot Norton lectures Lionel Trilling gave at Harvard in 1970.[1] At one point in these lectures, Trilling found himself linking the names of Robespierre and Jane Austen. He paused to say it must be the first time those two names had ever been linked like that. Maybe: and it indicates what at this stage I am going to call merely the flexibility of mind of the book, that they were. Thinking these lectures over, I found I wanted to link two names that also don't often come together: Gerard Manley Hopkins, whom Trilling doesn't mention, and the other, whom he says a good deal of, Hegel.

In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel has an opaque yet inexhaustibly illuminating section called "Spirit in Self-Estrangement—the Discipline of Culture." It offers much in respect of Trilling's position. Hegel seems to start with the conception of the individual self in a primitive, primal relation to the so-called "kingdom of consciousness", the social world which lies outside itself. The self's primary relation to this is undifferentiated activity: the exercise may be of power, may be of benevolence. But it is an unstable relation. As soon as the self begins to look at what it is doing, it in effect puts itself across into the opposite camp. It makes itself into an object of attention. So, it now stands among other objects. They too are objects of attention, so they're no longer just the polarity to the self's undifferentiating activity. Everything is now singled out, so it loses its primal reality; and so does the self along with it.

Yet, even as this happens, something opposite to it happens too. The self in its primal simplicity was scarcely a self at all. It comes to be a self as it departs from this primal simplicity. "The estrangement on the part of spirit from its natural existence is here the individual's true and original nature, his very substance", says Hegel. Suppose we try to say, "the individual wakes up to his position in society"—that's no good. What has not yet woken up is not an individual. Put this now in a given social context—that, say, of the individual who is simply the unquestioning servant of the power of society collectively, of the state. Suppose that this individual comes to have reservations about what he is doing. In one sense, his singleness of purpose and of being are destroyed. But what results is an individual who may be said to know where he stands: know that he must play a role, even if that role is one of unspoken doubt and self-doubt, of conscious submission to something outside him. In Hegel's historical context, that something takes the form of a monarch who can now be served only through dissimulation and flattery. Such a role will actually be a heightening and intensifying of the self. Hegel says: "The heroism of dumb service passes into the heroism of flattery . . . flattery raises the individual singleness." It now does so, in a complex social mesh of accepting an understood place in an understood scheme of things—of striking out a position which is at the same time a disintegration of position, a place which is at the same time a non-place, in a *culture*. Trilling's favourite word.

I have tried to paraphrase Hegel because he has expressed, in general terms, exactly the predicament underlying this book, and Trilling's work over twenty years. And Hopkins? Hegel was perhaps over-terse about that position of primal and integral activity from which his train of thought started. He drew it out of an enigmatical darkness. But at one stage in his life, Hopkins understood it perfectly and expressed it luminously. So much so, that the absolutely right word coined itself for him as he wrote. You'll hear that coinage in the middle of these lines from "As Kingfishers Catch Fire":

[1] *Sincerity and Authenticity*. By LIONEL TRILLING. Oxford University Press, £3.

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As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each
hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves– goes itself; myself *it speaks and spells,*
Crying What I do is me; for that I came.

I say more: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—

Selves. If ever the philosopher's mode of apprehension, and the literary mode, stood over against each other, they do so here.

Hopkins uses the word again—or rather, its opposite—in one poem where he notices (as he was almost the first English poet directly to notice) what Trilling calls "the deterioration of the organic environment." I am thinking of "Binsey Poplars." "Strokes of havoc *unselve*/The sweet especial scene." Hopkins often touched on how development and modernity, especially the modern world of commerce and productivity, were invading and disrupting the primal thisness of things, their capacity to *selve*, and our own capacity along with them.

THIS (and all about modernity that is implied by it) has long been among Trilling's major preoccupations. "The simple humanitarian optimism which, for two decades, has been so pervasive . . . has been politically and philosophically inadequate"—that's what he said back in 1940. In his new book, the starting-point is "the extent to which a society fosters, or corrupts, the sincerity of its citizens." Previously, in one major essay after another—"Manners, Morals and the Novel" of 1942, "The Situation of the American Intellectual at the Present Time" of 1952, "The Two Environments" of 1965—Trilling has addressed himself to engagement with literature in a context of diagnosing what modern civilisation is like, and in particular what pressures it imposes on the individual. So of course have many others; though not quite with his breadth, perspicacity and control. But the others have usually told us about literature and society, or literature and morality, mainly by way of diagnosing what Hegel called "the external element": what demands for conformity an externalised world of moral order makes on the individual. Trilling has never forgotten that literature is in the first place less a *pillar* of society than a *questioner* of society and a champion of something else. In 1955 he wrote: "In its essence literature is concerned with the self; and the particular concern of the literature of the last two centuries has been with the self in its standing quarrel with culture."

Those words epitomise the two main themes of

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the present book. There is the great primal fact of the self's urge towards authenticity of being, and without authenticity it cannot risk sincerity; and the corresponding literary reality is that literature's perennial message has been (as Trilling puts it in respect of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*) a "strange and terrible message of ambivalence towards the life of civilisation." No one has seen that strangeness and terror in literature with more concern than Trilling.

There is a certain amount in this book, of a quite straightforward kind, about what sincerity is; or about what authenticity is. But surprisingly little. At one point the author speaks of "such effort at definition" (of authenticity, that is) "as I shall later make": yet there isn't much later, and some aspects of both sincerity and authenticity hardly get touched on at all. For instance: I find myself not agreeing that sincerity in a person means either just "telling the truth about oneself *to* oneself and others" (the French meaning, Trilling says); or, "single-minded commitment, without deceit, to a dutiful enterprise" (the English pattern: though by Jane Austen's time the two patterns seem to have merged). For example: can one really say something like: "He was quite sincere, he told me he meant to seek only his own advantage"? Or can one say: "his sincerity shows at least in his unfailing selfishness"? I don't think so: or only in some stretched, sarcastic fashion.

SINCERITY in the full sense seems to mean something about openness before others, *as means*; as means to something beyond that openness, some direct concern for others and for their selfhoods. Sometimes it has no regard to being open about oneself. At the end of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Dorothea Brooke thinks she has seen the man she's in love with, more or less in Rosamund Vincy's arms. She's stricken to the heart, but next day she goes to Rosamund, who's married, and tries—disinterestedly—to warn her against the destructiveness of what she seems to be doing. It's a moment of breathtaking sincerity in Dorothea, in some sense: but that, actually because she's at pains to try not to speak of her personal involvement—of course, it would only have confused the issue. I don't see how Trilling could accommodate Dorothea.

Again, it's uncommon to say that an individual is "authentic" though certainly one can say it. Yet there's some rather strange difference between using "authentic" of people and of things. We could say a man was authentic, "the real thing", as a monk, maybe, or a soldier, and we shouldn't in the least be put off by knowing that he'd modelled himself on the pattern of someone else—was in a sense a copy. "The sentiment of being", which for Trilling is the key to authenticity, is, he says, "the sense of being strong. Which is not to say powerful." If I understand the sentiment of being at all, it's something more primitive.

Trilling doesn't take such points far, because he's not trying to make a general psychological map of the territory of sincerity and authenticity. He cares about how the individual's sincerity and authenticity relate to society: whether society is the enemy of these things, or their ally, and more particularly, how literature, over the past two hundred years, has charted the relations and tensions between the two.

Of course! What else would Trilling be doing, what else would seem to stand like a culmination of his work? One thinks back, over the years, to his essays on Jane Austen, on "Wordsworth and the Rabbis," and the rest, and these are the problems he has recurrently tackled. And it is here, in this field of how and where literature bears on the tension between society and the individual, that the joy of this splendid book resides.

FOR IT IS a splendid book. Trilling once wrote an essay called "The Fate of Pleasure", and it would appear from this, and from a good deal else, that he is not over-drawn to writing as a source of pleasure: rightly, no doubt, he thinks its dividends more substantial. All the same, how much pleasure this book will give its readers!—the richness and adroitness of the style; but at the same time, plenty of crispness that never becomes abrasiveness:—"a comedy of principle, perfidy and blood"; "this suggestion Rousseau repels with rational indignation." Above all, there's our sense of the writer himself. Not how well Trilling brings other works to a focus, writing as if from a really perfected familiarity with them; not, his powers of interconnection; not even his patrician considerateness towards the reader. These are graces—though Hopkins's poem had a place for graces even at this modest level—or at most they are substantial matters of the second rank. The great thing is that with Trilling we have a writer who is approaching an academic task, a task of study and criticism, in a spirit of total largeness, lucidity and directness with regard to the deepest questions of man, life and the world. Trilling does not (as Arnold put it) "strive or cry." He has no opposing self, nothing to denounce. In an earlier volume, writing on Tacitus, he was able to call up Portia's words about the "good deed in a naughty world", and add: ". . . a naughty world, literally a world of naught, a moral vacancy so great and black that in it the beam of a candle seems a flash of lightning." Trilling can bring the darkest issues of our own

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time into academic discussion with a kind of sad but dauntless clarity. "Dauntless" . . . I use the word, strange to our ears, deliberately; because, of all things, in our literary-academic world Trilling has to be called a heroic figure: almost the only one. This book includes one character-sketch. Here's how it reads: ". . . uncompromising commitment to duty . . . continuous concentration of the personal energies upon some impersonal end, the subordination of life to some general good . . . *singleness of mind and openness of soul*." Whoever is this? Trilling thinks it's a sketch of the ideal of the naval officer. Trilling's books make it sound like Trilling.

Not that I find myself always agreeing with the accounts of individual books or passages. He makes a good deal of how Rousseau said that listening to novels read aloud to him in his childhood gave him "the unbroken sentiment of being." But Trilling quotes this in English, and I ask myself if he has turned up the French, which is far less resonant and anyway seems to mean something rather different. When he discusses the famous *Letter to d'Alembert* in which Rousseau denounces the idea of opening a theatre at Geneva, Trilling doesn't do enough to separate out the interesting strand in the argument from the others (all actresses immoral, etc., etc.) and show how closely Rousseau tried to formulate this argument in terms of a quite special Genevan society, and so how what he says here is opposite to what he says elsewhere. Trilling gives a brilliant rendering of the almost demented versatility, tumultuous prescience, fantastic sincerity-in-insincerity of Diderot's extraordinary character, Rameau's Nephew: and then—there is something he cannot do. Suddenly his power over words has gone. He says the nephew is "reduced to a bare subsistence", "hardly manages to maintain himself." Phrases like these don't speak with Trilling's full voice. They miss the streak—an early Romantic streak—of grotesque pathos and squalor in Rameau's Nephew, his nearness to what was brutal in his time, his nasty daily battle with the 18th-century commonplace of simple starvation. And if it comes to that, when Trilling describes Conrad's Kurtz, in his "kingdom" in *Heart of Darkness*, with the curious words, "his reign being remarkable for its cruelty", there is the same current failing again. Why?

Isolated moments of weakness, but do they point somewhere? Suppose we are rather crass, and simply ask, straight out, whether the individual should seek sincerity and authenticity within the social bond, or outside and against it; or suppose we ask whether our, as he calls it, "most esteemed certitude" personal autonomy, is really fostered by art, or whether art is "one of the agents of conformity." In his heart of hearts, Trilling has answers, for sure; and they peep out. When he writes of how Hegel endorses the in a sense gallantly anti-social feelings of Rameau's Nephew, he does so, yes, with eloquence and sympathy. But when he writes of the "archaic noble life" of the "great and beautiful houses with the ever-remembered names" in Jane Austen, where the sentiment of being is one with the sentiment of society, in the highest sense, the note is altogether more inward and devoted. When he writes of the disreputable modern cult of madness as true selfhood in the "coercive inauthenticity" of modern society, his pain and contempt are apparent. Yet what does he say? Only that it represents "the intellectual mode which once went under the name of cant."

We can see all these as symptoms, inconspicuous maybe, of how Trilling strives to enter into everything but never lose his balance one iota. An impossible task maybe, and the result is a rather pervasive inconclusiveness as regards ultimates. There is a great interplay and intermesh of irony in this book, which is another way of describing the "flexibility" I mentioned before. But Trilling himself once wrote: "not more than a little irony is appropriate." Perhaps some readers will sense that interplay as settling down in the end to sharp edges everywhere, but I can't quite do that.

THE KEY SEEMS to lie in the very nature of the liberal imagination. Trilling is a rather conservative liberal—his warmth over Jane Austen, reverence for the traditional in Wordsworth, instant allegiance to the Apollonian side of Freud, all suggest that. But he is also what James would have called "an immense sensibility." Wherever there is a challenge to the patrician rationality which is Trilling's first love, he pursues it, not indeed with fascination, but with "singleness of mind and openness of soul." The wild men, and the wilder, darker side, of Diderot, of Hegel, of Freud, and elsewhere than in the present book of writers like Conrad or Isaac Babel, he explores with eager, dedicated, or hopeless resolve. He feels what he himself once called "the excitement of suddenly being liberated from Aristotle" and Aristotle's logicality. The "immense sensibility" wants to enter into everything, giving it not just an academic kind of justice, but a robust and pregnant felt life; and to fill itself, and us, with awareness that times have been changing, that the academic apprehension is not enough, that we must stretch every way, see a hundred modes of authenticity, and somehow draw on them all in striving to create one for ourselves.

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A hundred modes of authenticity . . . I can understand it if Trilling forgot that poem of Hopkins. That primal authenticity, open to a stone or a string, is far from his kind. If I had to diagnose his kind, I should venture to do it an odd way. Trilling seems to me the opposite *moment*, in a Hegelian sense, from Rameau's nephew. Not the plain, polar opposite: a stone is that, or maybe Wordsworth. But if you think of an equal to the Nephew in brilliance, charm and versatility, yet at the same time a man with sympathy, instead of cynicism, to go out in every direction; and with "a personal character that is grave, dense and persistent"—exuberance of responsibility and self-dedication, not parasitism; and yet at the same time someone who finds his own sincerity and authenticity exactly in that activity of endless and ubiquitous self-departure—if you try to imagine such a character, in all its complexity, all its great but troubling winningness—it's Lionel Trilling.

The Acting Business

By Richard Findlater

ALTHOUGH MICHAEL BILLINGTON insists in his welcome book *The Modern Actor*[1] that "acting is not something that can be discussed in isolation from the structure of the entertainment industry or the society surrounding it", this is precisely how it all too often *is* discussed, outside Equity conclaves. That is why Mr Billington's "sincere expression of an ungovernable concern about the acting profession" is, in spite of its blanks and vagaries, outstanding among the clutter of reviewers' bookmaking, academic criticism, antiquarian history and showbiz hagiography that dominates the annual output of "theatre books." He writes shrewdly and sensibly, with liberal quotation from actors, agents and directors, about what is wrong with theatrical organisation, training, and working conditions:

> Britain has at the moment some of the finest actors in the world, but the muddle and chaos surrounding the acting profession often leads to criminal waste.

Mr Billington does, however, begin his book a bit uncertainly with some strange general assertions which demand brief attention here because they indicate some points central to the "muddle and chaos" surrounding the popular (and critical) valuation of his elusive subject. The critic of *The Guardian* contends, for instance, that what he calls, largely, "the modern actor" gets "a raw deal" from the press, *vis-à-vis* the writer and director in the theatre. To most people this may appear the reverse of the truth: far from being undervalued, the significance of the successful performer's role—not only in the theatre but outside it in society—is dizzily inflated, and is still swelling apace. Not only does he frequently appear to have more money, more power, more publicity, and more love than other men; critically, he is too often credited with other men's flowers. It is not only Aunt Edna who pays homage to a star for words and ideas imbibed (sometimes with blood and tears) from the author, and for ways of expressing them into which he has been cajoled or conned by the director.

Bad performances by good actors; inadequate performances by inexperienced actresses; the "presence" of some personality whose voltage is a bit above average—all have been wildly overpraised by national critics (and will be again); while outside London the indiscriminate application of soft soap by clottish if courteous reporters is a notorious phenomenon of theatre notices. Far from neglecting the actor for other members in the stage or film team, the press tends to focus all its attention on him with a good-natured, if sometimes ill-informed, acceptance of his prime importance. But what Mr Billington means, it turns out, is that his fellow-critics do not appreciate (or adequately record) the technical excellences of the excellent actor: as Mr B does, or tries to do (admirably, in describing Olivier's Shylock: not so admirably elsewhere in this book). And for him the acting that matters, he makes it clear later, is *theatre* acting. Although, as he says, the actor is "required by economic circumstance to be a man for all media", top-class acting on television, he suggests, is impossible: the actor on TV is "simply part of a continuous electronic flow." And as for film acting these days: well, Mr Billington doesn't think much of *that*. "Acting may, as O'Toole said, be a

[1] *The Modern Actor*. By MICHAEL BILLINGTON. Hamish Hamilton, £3.75.

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question of farting about in disguises. But today on the screen a lot of it is simply farting about." And Mr Billington writes from experience, as a reviewer of both television and films.

AGAIN, MR BILLINGTON informs us, early on, that the actor is "part of the new aristocracy." *Aristocratic?* Most actors, in fact, could as well be said to be part of the new cultural proletariat: they are still casual labourers —underpaid, undertrained, overworked (when on the job), over-competitive. There is a far higher rate of unemployment among actors than among any other professional or industrial workers. When in work most theatre actors are paid less for longer hours than, say, dockers or car-workers, let alone such "professionals" as doctors or accountants. Paid holidays, pensions and sick pay are still rare. Until recently, many actors were not paid at all for theatre rehearsals: they were expected to invest their labour freely, as a gamble on a play's success. Working conditions in many theatres would not be tolerated by other trade unionists: in 1969 Equity claimed that "there is hardly one theatre in Britain that could satisfy the minimal requirements of the Offices, Shops and Factory Premises Act" (less than half, for instance, had the minimum number of wash basins). Although minimum provincial salaries have increased nearly fourfold in twenty years, they are still below the national average wage. Far from being aristocratic, many actors can scarcely be described as professional: how can the name of "profession" be given to a nominal activity which is *not* pursued, most of the year, by most of Equity's members? Acting is not so much a profession as a condition, to which an increasing number of optimists annually aspire. It may well be argued that, as Granville Barker resoundingly said, "the art of theatre is the art of acting, first, last, and all the time." But this art of acting, however it may be defined, is something with which a great many Equity members have not yet had the chance to get acquainted, as Mr Billington well knows. Their world, as he says, is "hopelessly disorganised" and "ludicrously overcrowded." (Just *how* disorganised and overcrowded needs, perhaps, rather more detailed emphasis in a book labelled "The Modern Actor.")

THE LATEST EQUITY report on its members' employment and earnings—published, oddly enough, in the same week as Mr Billington's book—indicates that the "median average" pay of performers in 1971 was under £20 a week: actors earned, on average, under £17, compared with the £36 national average for all workers.

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Television provided, on average, no more than 17 days work a year; while the reps, the biggest source of theatrical work and, indeed, work of any kind, employed a quarter of the membership for less than a quarter of the year. By accepting less than a living wage, many were making a valuable personal contribution to the Arts Council's subsidy, without which all the reps would collapse. Nearly half the people in the Equity survey were on the dole.

Why, then, does Mr Billington suggest that these anomalies in a welfare state are "new aristocrats"? What he appears to mean is that the temporarily successful actor—and successful non-actor, too, Equity member or not—is likely to be deluged, as long as the gravy train runs, with invitations from TV producers, gossip columnists, charity organisers, advertising agencies and the secretaries of luncheon clubs; he will be in demand to sell goods, open bazaars, and deliver opinions on anything under the sun, as long as he stays in the public eye. He is part not so much of an aristocracy as of a throw away élite, the instant oracle-clowns of the media. The possibility that he may also join the ranks of the instant rich is, of course, one reason why the "profession" is so overcrowded—why twice as many members were admitted to Equity in 1971 as in 1951, although there are fewer jobs (allowing for the merger meanwhile with the Variety Artistes Federation). Actors are gamblers, in a casino business: they bet, heavily and obsessively, on the chance that a letter, a phone call, an audition, a pick-up *may* bring a windfall—perhaps a small fortune for a few weeks' work. And for a very lucky, very few, windfalls recur. In spite of everything, people go on trying to be accepted as actors because they dream of jackpot glories which have, as a rule, little to do with the art of acting about whose exercise (and development) Mr Billington is demonstrably concerned. He quotes an experienced agent—Cary Ellison, of Spotlight—as saying: "If 10,000 actors went into the hotel business tomorrow, the whole entertainment industry would be much refreshed." That may be taken with a large pinch of alka seltzer—though Mr Ellison's suggestion that the same benefit could be achieved "if 200 agents disappeared overnight" will be more widely approved—but there are clearly far too many actors, or at least people who are down on the books as actors and—for a few years at least—try to persuade other people that they are members of a profession to which they have no claim of talent or experience.

But how do you stop them from flooding in? The poser of "regulated entry" has been argued by actors, backwards and forwards, for many years. Is it right? Is it even feasible? Many actors (including some of the best) plead that the stagedoors must always be left open to out-of-the-rut, late-developing, contact-less talent: everyone can produce cautionary tales of actors who were warned off the stage at drama school, or flopped repeatedly in their years of apprenticeship, only to rise to stardom (in skill, as distinct from billing). The opposition contends that the continual swamping of the market by untrained labour, the creation of an expanding pool of unemployment, devalues the trade as well as the craft, damaging the theatre as a business and an art. Equity has, in fact, made considerable progress over the years in hard bargaining with the managers towards a closed shop (and a more rational organisation), though vast questions remain unanswered; but now the Industrial Relations Act has put all that progress in question, raising problems of regulation and competition, central to democratic cultural organisation, for which I wish that Mr Billington had found more space.

HE IS, HOWEVER, admirably forthright and succinct on such practical matters as the scandal of agencies (and their association with employers); and on the puzzlement of the drama schools. "Anyone can set up a drama school provided the building has enough lavatories and fire escapes to get planning permission." Nobody knows, precisely, how many schools there are. About a dozen are "recognised as official" by Whitehall, but there are scores of other "unofficial establishments, plus university and college courses, "turning out candidates for the Equity card and the dole", training for appearances before the National Assistance auditions. Mr Billington criticises the top schools for being too doggedly empirical and neglectful of theory; for doing too little to prepare students for the jungle outside; and, in particular, for failing to take TV and film acting seriously enough. But the main trouble is, of course, that there are far too many schools and far too many people in them who shouldn't have been encouraged (or subsidised) to train there. Among Mr Billington's more helpful suggestions for coping with the problem is that the local authority should, in making grants, enlist the help of the nearest professional theatre director; that a central body should issue licences, and revoke them if the schools don't meet certain requirements; that no new school should be licensed unless it is attached to a theatre, or unless there is no alternative school within a "reasonable" distance (more arguably, he also recommends that a condition of the license should be that *all* staff should have had at least five years' experience in the professional

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theatre, and that the school should provide for "camera-acting as well as stage-acting").

After school is over, as Mr Billington complains, there is a dismal dearth of further training (and the will to do it). All too often, young actors are "ignorant of tradition and impatient with the past"; they are—in contrast to their precursors of a century ago—overwhelmed and confused by the dazzling variety of stylistic influences and examples (in texts and performances); and they are often promoted ahead of their talent and experience, never to compensate for the lack of basic exploration and education. As Peter Brook says (and Mr Billington quotes him), "there are countless actors who never have the chance to develop their inborn potential to its proper fruition" (as well as those who don't want to try); and one purpose of his International Theatre Centre, and its pilgrimages into the Middle East and Africa, is to demonstrate how the actor's vocabulary, equipment and resources may be enlarged and transformed by *work*, by going back to school.

This under-training and cultural malnutrition is, in part, due to the economic and organisational anarchy of the industry on which the actor depends (or tries to); but the devaluation of the craft or art of acting is also influenced by the tendency reflected in one of Mr Billington's stimulating over-simplifications: "We are all actors now." On the one hand, there is the theatricalisation of politics, both establishment and guerrilla; the conversion of "current events" (the world of telegrams and anger) into fodder for fireside chat-shows and shockers; the compulsive casting of notabilities and nonentities as performers. On the other hand, observe the de-theatricalisation of acting on the screen (and the possibility of employing such a noun), with the exaltation of the amateur, the cult of being natural (rather than naturalist), of Just Being Yourself—in preference to the hypocrisy of pretending to be other people.

WHEN IT COMES to the *quality* of acting, and the business, craft and art of criticism, Mr Billington borrows heavily from Ken Tynan in defining the summit. He lists complete physical relaxation; powerful physical magnetism; commanding eyes, visible at the back of the gallery (it's only in the theatre, of course, that great acting may be seen); a commanding voice, audible without effort in the same quarter; superb timing; *chutzpah*, "the untranslatable Jewish word which means cool nerve and outrageous effrontery combined"; and "the ability to communicate a sense of danger." To Mr Tynan's excellent inventory he adds "acute

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interpretative intelligence"—"the better the actor, the greater the intelligence"—and, much more questionably, "an essentially bisexual quality". It is one thing to observe, acutely, of Olivier that "no one makes more positive and creative use of his femininity"; another to declare "one of the pleasures of watching acting lies in seeing a man —or woman—embodying the kind of sexual conflict that psychiatrists say resides in all of us"; that we, as audiences, are "exactly like voyeurs" (*exactly*?); that "Sending away an audience happy is exactly akin to sending a lover away satisfied," as Ken Dodd does (*exactly*, again?) Apart from Mr Dodd, Mr Billington's choice of top performers includes Olivier (Shylock), McKellen (Richard II), Nicol Williamson (Hamlet), Leonard Rossiter (Arturo Ui), and Paul Scofield (the Captain of Kopenick); he praises Frankie Howerd as "arguably the most Brechtian actor in Britain"; and Danny La Rue as "a perfect example of the alienation technique at work."

> When Mr La Rue comes on stage, he helps us to fulfil our dreams; and that is as much as one can ever ask of any entertainer.

About that, as about a good deal more in *The Modern Actor*—and the obsession it describes—there is plenty of room for continuing argument.

No Villain Need Be

The First Mrs Meredith—By ANTHONY THWAITE

GREAT ARTISTS are often insufferable, and the fact has frequently been exploited by artists who have been less than great. To behave badly is to be a genius: on such a syllogism many a distraught wife and injured friend has been skewered. Whether George Meredith was an artist of the front rank is still matter for debate, and so is the question whether he treated his first wife shabbily. Much of the evidence not only of what he felt but of the "truth" of that marital situation is sought in Meredith's own work—in those novels which seem to be most heavily autobiographical, and in the extraordinary sequence of 16-line poems, *Modern Love*. The rest of the evidence is tucked away in a few cryptic references here and there.

That the marriage between Meredith and Mary Ellen Peacock was a disaster is not matter for debate. It lasted eight years, and all who knew them were aware that for at least half that time they were miserable with each other. In 1857, Mary eloped with Henry Wallis, the painter who earlier on had used Meredith as the model for his portrait of "The Death of Chatterton." Four years later, she died. Meredith hardly spoke of her again. In all his 2,600 collected letters, she is scarcely referred to. The early biographers and editors of Meredith were embarrassed by the whole business—naturally so, since most of them had some family connection with the man. Later biographers, such as Siegfried Sassoon and Lionel Stevenson, weren't inhibited by such pieties but were short of material. There has been the suspicion that Meredith himself, and perhaps those early biographers, destroyed papers that might have been painfully revealing.

Now Diane Johnson, an American novelist, enters the lists as Mary's declared champion. Instead of being an obscure figure, a "lesser life"[1] subsumed in the creative lives of her father (Thomas Love Peacock) and Meredith, Mary is propelled with considerable energy and warmth to the front of the stage as "a new—a modern—Victorian heroine", a liberated woman, a tragedienne born before (or after) her due time. "Mrs Meredith's life", writes Miss Johnson, "can be looked upon, of course, as an episode in the lives of Meredith or Peacock, but it cannot have seemed that way to her."

Biographers are frequently devoted to their subjects, but there are few as fiercely committed as Miss Johnson. She refuses to be other than partisan. Because she is so zealous to see justice done to her heroine, Meredith must be twisted into being a standard Victorian moralist, and worse—proud, selfish, pompous, hypocritical, devious, a monster of cold insensitivity. Similarly, all his earlier biographers must be characterised as if they were all members of the same jealous clique, desperate to conceal the truth, of which Miss Johnson is the sole custodian.

But one of the chief troubles is that very little is known about Mary's precise movements (or anything approaching precision about her states of mind) during certain crucial periods; so Diane Johnson has to shore up her defence with a reiteration of "perhaps" and "maybe" and "possibly." Gossip and speculation are elements

[1] *The True History of the First Mrs Meredith and Other Lesser Lives*. By DIANE JOHNSON. Heinemann, £3; Knopf, $7.95.

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in biography, indeed, but they don't in themselves constitute biography. This seems to escape Miss Johnson, who is so eager to break the dominance of the conventional "Life" that she becomes arch, careless, and sometimes downright silly. Inspired by imaginative indignation, *Lesser Lives* is made up of disjunctive and discrete sections, almost like a commonplace book; perhaps justifiably so, for Miss Johnson makes great play with Mary's own commonplace book, now in the Beinecke Library at Yale. This is obviously an extremely interesting document, but Miss Johnson is far too heavily committed to treating it as a series of exhibits in the Case Against George Meredith and attaches to it a weight it won't bear.

In her determination to see justice done to Mary, she becomes absurd. Meredith's most trivial shortcomings are held up to withering contempt. Let him spell the word "dulness" (a perfectly acceptable 19th-century spelling, and still permissible) and she follows it with a scornful *sic*; whereas Henry Wallis gets away unrebuked with "measels" twice. Again, Meredith's later quitting of his lodging with Rossetti and Swinburne is attributed to the fact that "he was really so delicate that he couldn't bear to see Rossetti eat eggs in the morning"—a cheaply unfair twisting of a typically grotesque and self-mocking anecdote on Meredith's part. Such minor matters may seem hardly worth comment; but they are rather too typical of Miss Johnson's strategies.

MARY WAS AN UNUSUALLY gifted, courageous and beautiful woman: this much we already know. We also know that the years she spent with Meredith were marked by his early struggles to make a living as a writer, and we can infer that he was a grimly difficult companion. But he was in no sense a "typical Victorian" in his attitudes to women and marriage: his marriage failed, as others have done before and since, because two mismatched people found it impossible to live together without endless pain and recrimination, not because he was a self-righteous ogre:

> *I see no sin:*
> *The wrong is mixed. In tragic life, God wot,*
> *No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:*
> *We are betrayed by what is false within.*

In general, Miss Johnson seems to have little sense of period, and is eager to diminish Victorian attitudes with all Lytton Strachey's campaigning zest but without Strachey's knowledge and skill. She surveys what happened "then", "in those days" (naïvely insistent phrases, like "long, long ago"), with a briskly unfeeling incomprehension and condescension. And incomprehension slides

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into facetiousness and fatuity: "She was . . . the daughter of a parson (like everyone else then, it seems)"; "Everyone had headache, and lay about on sofas"; ". . . the spring of 1861 was no doubt beautiful, like all English springs."

It is all a great pity. Miss Johnson has had access to some fascinating unpublished material, and her heart is in (approximately) the right place: that much one can say without reserve. But the first Mrs Meredith is hardly less elusive than ever, while still as tragic as one knew she was before the appearance of *Lesser Lives*. As for Meredith himself, he has been slandered and quite wrongly made to seem contemptible. That Diane Johnson provokes such indignation on my part is perhaps some measure of the passion her "lives" can still arouse—though that is small justification for her methods.

Transparent Likenesses

New Novels—By Jonathan Raban

THE DEEPEST FEELING in Nabokov's novels—often their only feeling—is pathos; an autumnal sentimental sadness at the loneliness and transitoriness of things. He is the Busby Berkeley of *weltschmerz* (or *weltschmaltz*): a great choreographer and prestidigitator whose most ambitious and brilliant set-pieces are mounted around a single tear-jerking tableau. The halitotic Kinbote peers miserably through his window at the lavish party being thrown by the Shades next door; Humbert sees his masterpiece, his Lolita, transformed into a suburban slut called Mrs Richard F. Schiller. Unwrap a Nabokov novel from its packaging of games, tricks with mirrors and tough ironical philosophising, and one is left with an exquisite weepie. *Lolita* began, so he has said, with the image of a luckless ape whose hard-luck story Nabokov chanced upon in a newspaper. This creature, when it was equipped by its keepers with paints and paper, was only able to draw the bars of its cage. Nabokov himself has gone on to ever more delicately shaded aquatints of the interior of the prison, but at the heart of each new novel there squats the same mangy, dishevelled ape, clutching its brush in a hairy paw and rolling huge appealing eyes in the direction of the RSPCA. Lately, the ape has begun to look uncannily like Nabokov: its furrowed brow and hanging jowls, its dyspeptic manner and heavy Russian accent, increasingly give it the appearance of a pantomime costume, in which the sweating novelist has thinly disguised himself.

Transparent Things[1] is a novel about the pathos of authorship, the lonely solipsism of the fiction writer busily peopling an illusory world. It is both the least admirable, and the most revealing, of all Nabokov's novels. The reader is invited to eavesdrop on the relationship between an author and his character—poor Hugh Person, summoned out of the void and made to dance his shallow, evanescent life through the pages of the book. Hugh is pronounced "you", and Person is used in its primary sense, as "mask" or "persona." Nabokov nets him like a butterfly in the first sentence, then pins him out in a sequence of twenty-six chapterlets, muttering asides to the reader about technical difficulties as he does so. For even a mask drips with gobbets of its own history; it is not a transparent thing. Transparency is a condition of living in the present, of moving through objects and events with a careless disregard for their natures and histories.

> A thin veneer of immediate reality is spread over natural and artificial matter, and whoever wishes to remain in the now, with the now, on the now, should please not break its tension film.

In Nabokov's fiction, the only people who live comfortably with this transparency, who walk effortlessly on the water, are the girls, bright and insensate as lepidoptera. Lolita, content with her candy and pin-ups of film stars, was Nabokov's supreme skater on the surface tension of life; her inconsequential, butterfly-death in childbirth was an essential ingredient of her talent for remaining in the now. In the new novel, there is a descendant of hers, a bland, pretty, open-air girl called Armande, whose passion is for skiing down Swiss mountainsides. But the snow she slides over, hardly denting with her fibreglass skis, is a glacial crust which keeps the world of feeling at one remove from her feet. Like Lolita, she is heading for a casual demise, to be throttled by Person in his sleep.

Novelists, and persons too, are poor skiers. Person stumbles wheezily behind Armande, never able to keep up. He is burdened by his age, his past, his job as publisher's editor (he is in Switzerland to attend to the latest manuscript of R., a novel called *Tralatitions* written in a style of Nabokovian rococo). Unable to manage the trudge up the mountain, he sits on the hotel

[1] *Transparent Things*. By VLADIMIR NABOKOV. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £1.75.

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terrace trying to spot Armande's brightly coloured parka through a pair of binoculars. But Person, like R., is only a stand-in for Nabokov himself; as Person chases Armande in Switzerland, Nabokov chases Person in his book. Round and round they go, continuous as a frieze round an urn. Nabokov crops up, anagrammatised, as a "minor character" in *Tralatitions* called Adam von Librikov. In *Transparent Things* (the parallel between the two novels is clearer if we know that "tralatitious" is a synonym for "metaphoric") Nabokov is his own major character: his fictional people make up a paper chase of transparent metaphors which lead straight back to the groaning novelist, weighed down by a world he has himself created.

His control over this world has a godlike arbitrariness. He knows what he chooses to know. The book is dotted with parentheses which enclose fragments of a total knowledge which would render the selections and suspenses of fiction trivial and absurd. So, when Person looks at a green carved figurine of a skier in a souvenir-shop window, Nabokov is able to remark:

> (it was "alabasterette", imitation aragonite, carved and coloured in the Grumbel jail by a homosexual convict, rugged Armand Rave, who had strangled his boyfriend's incestuous sister.)

The only point of view from which this passage could have been written is from beyond the grave; a hypothetical position of ultimate memory to which all the gropers and stumblers in the novel (Person, R., Nabokov) are trying to aspire. Nabokov gives them what they want: he kills off R. with a disease of the liver, and immolates Person in an hotel fire. True transparency lies only on the other side, when every pun, coincidence, and historical accident can be perceived simultaneously.

But Nabokov, despite these occasional forays into the posthumous, is alive and well in a world where certainty stops at the present. *Transparent Things* is really two novels. One is a tale told by an earthbound storyteller, judiciously guessing at what will happen next; the other is an impersonation of the sort of novel God might write on a lazy day with one eye closed. At the beginning of the twenty-fifth chapter, with Person well and truly pinned to his fate, Nabokov inquires:

> What had you expected of your pilgrimage, Person? A mere mirror rerun of hoary torments? Sympathy from an old stone? Enforced re-creation of irrecoverable trivia? A search for lost time in an utterly distinct sense from Goodgrief's dreadful *"Je me souviens, je me souviens de la maison où je suis né"* or, indeed, Proust's quest? He had never experienced here (save once at the end of his last ascent) anything but boredom and bitterness.

The questions enshrine a list of conventional descriptions of the pleasures and duties of fiction.

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The novel as a form is rooted in the past: Nabokov is trying to drag it into the future, to experience the delightful melancholy of events which have not yet come about. The *temps perdus* of *Transparent Things* have been lost to the side of and beyond the lives of the characters in the book.

But the enterprise is an indulgent one. We are left with the lone figure of the novelist brooding over the incompleteness of the world, imagining it from an impossible perspective so that it achieves the aesthetic perfection which it so lacks in actuality. In life, all is boredom and bitterness; in the art of the "miracle-worker", shabby intractable things, like girls and publishers' editors and novelists with liver diseases, are wonderfully transmuted into lucent transparencies.

Yet Nabokov cheats persistently. One feels none of life's resistance in this new novel. In *Pale Fire* and *Lolita*, there was the raw stuff of America to contend with. To write *Lolita*, Nabokov claimed that he used to travel around Boston on buses, collecting teenage slang. He thrived on the vulgarity of American life, assiduous in his observation of the motels, suburbs and freeways in which *Lolita* is set. Whatever else it may be, that book is joyously steeped in the sticky liquid substance of the United States in the 1950s; it reeks of the Howard Johnson's lunch counter and the hot stench of overheated leatherette in a slouching, chrome-clad Buick. *Pale Fire*, too, is marvellous on the muffled, genteel paranoia of the New England college campus. To transform these things into the tantalising, elegant shapes they assume in the novels was the accomplishment of a real miracle-worker. But Nabokov now is an idle magician: he turns water into wine out of sheer boredom.

He is irritated with his characters even before he gives them life. They are mere cursory squiggles on the paper, pawns in a larger game. Person is a melancholy cipher; Armande a cut-out from an advertisement for anoraks in a winter sports brochure. With R., Nabokov does rather better, painting a comic self-portrait. The novelist speaks a racy, idiomatic, foreigner's English, in which every vernacular expression comes out slightly wrong. "You're jolly right, son. . . . So long and soon see. . . ." But all this is done with enervated proficiency, like a painter's telephone doodlings. And when he comes to write of Switzerland, he crudely miniaturises the landscape, bringing it down to the pygmy-scale of the characters. The physical world which we are invited to contemplate in *Transparent Things* is like a souvenir scene made of coloured paper inside a glass sphere. Shake it, and the snow flies up and settles in a flurry of soda-chips. Nabokov himself shakes this paltry toy irritably, twenty-six times.

The ideas which were once alive in his fiction are now treated with bored petulance.

> Men have learned to live with a black burden, a huge aching hump: the supposition that "reality" may be only a "dream". How much more dreadful it would be if the very awareness of your being aware of reality's dreamlike nature were also a dream, a built-in hallucination! One should bear in mind, however, that there is no mirage without a vanishing point, just as there is no lake without a closed circle of reliable land.

For all the introductory pieties about "black burden" and "dreadful", one feels Nabokov yawning at the notion. Perhaps he has succeeded in translating himself into that nether world of ultimate knowledge from which everything human looks small, silly, and woefully unaesthetic. At any rate, *Transparent Things* reveals a novelist who has grown tired and irascible at his own cleverness. I can stay dry-eyed at the pathos of such a lonely surfeit of knowledge. Nabokov's fatal immersion in these private, occult pursuits finally betrays—for all its cerebral bravura—a lack of intelligence, an aridity of feeling.

THE TITLE OF PAUL BAILEY'S third novel, *A Distant Likeness*,[2] suggests a similar concern with the ghostly insubstantiality of experience and the perils which lie in wait for the fiction writer who dares to transpose that experience into the solid continuities of a book. Like Nabokov, Bailey has broken the form of the novel down into a tray of slides, each one preserving a small fragment of vivid life. As in *Trespasses*, he has largely replaced the conventional structure of chapters by a prose collage of single paragraphs. By isolating these scraps of language, Bailey makes us attend to them with a concentration usually reserved for poems. Indeed, his writing always has the flavour of ritual; a thin slice of dialogue, rhythmically phrased and pointed, takes on the appearance of a sequence of antiphonal responses; a lone metaphor, explored with ceremonial deference, assumes a scriptural authority. He is a prodi-

[2] *A Distant Likeness*. By PAUL BAILEY. Cape, £1.60.

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giously gifted technician, capable of making a sentence balance on the head of a pin. His lean, restrained style has an athletic discipline; and he makes most British prose writers look like careless gossips. The question raised by *A Distant Likeness* is whether Bailey is a tennis champion who has chosen merely to practise strokes of genius in an empty court. A dissenting review of the novel in the *T.L.S.* said bluntly:

> No amount of ingenuity in the deployment of symbols, the details which echo meaningfully across the pages, the nice attention to miniscule portrayals of settings, can compensate for the final absence of the full-blooded novel which Mr Bailey's skills might have provided. *A Distant Likeness* is thin stuff unless one is gullibly willing to fill it out with all that it does not contain.

The line between full-bloodedness and full-frontal vulgarity, and between filling out and ordinarily imaginative reading, is finer than the *T.L.S.* reviewer allows. Bailey is an unusually delicate novelist; he not only makes the reader work hard but throws him back on the resources of his own taste to such an extent that it is often very difficult to distinguish between what we have imagined and what he has written. I am still not sure whether that shadow on the tennis court is a real opponent or a ghost.

This is especially peculiar since the general outlines of *A Distant Likeness* are coarse-grained in the extreme. A "tight bastard" of a detective has a mental breakdown, and the book is a tessellation of the memories which besiege him after his control has snapped. Frank White would fit comfortably into the cast of *Z-Cars* or *Softly, Softly*—although a TV script-writer might have made him rather more humanly engaging. He is a hard-nosed cop, drawn more from convention than from life. During the novel, we watch him trying to bludgeon a confession from a murderer whose only response is to hand over bits of paper with "No more words" written on them. A ghost writer called Alec scripts Inspector White's memoirs (*I am the man who sniffed out Albert Hawker. Readers of the (insert name of newspaper) will remember who he is.*), then runs off with his wife. White finds solace for a night in the arms of an implausibly angelic homosexual; when, following Jonathan Guinness's recipe for the treatment of criminals, White gives his unconfessed murderer a knife to slit his throat with, the man stabs a warder, and it is the Inspector who finds himself helping the police with their inquiries. If my synopsis sounds crude and bald, it is not unfaithful to what actually happens in the novel. What, then, is Bailey up to, meddling in this sort of formula-melodrama?

Throughout *A Distant Likeness* there is a calculated dissonance between form and performance: at every point, the lightness, tact and

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stylistic subtlety of the writing chafes against the brutal symmetry of the plot. Within the novel, Frank White's life is ghost-written in the appalling philistine gobbledygook of what he calls a "barmaid's bible"; at the hands of his "ghost", he turns into a banal stereotype, mouthing low clichés about law and order. As a prisoner of the plot of the novel, he becomes, like Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe, a mean, hard-boiled realist, dulled by experience before a world so gross and ugly that only a cop could walk its streets. He is immune to suffering, bored, brutalised, alone. His only act of generosity is to buy an old man a bar of soap to wash out the smell of his armpits; and he regards his own life, his own feelings, with contempt, as a subject unworthy of tragedy or even pathos. In a telling passage, he checks over his emotional armour after his wife has gone, and finds a philosophic consolation in the casual violence and indifference to feeling of the world in which he moves.

> Wives left their husbands, husbands their wives, every single day. He was no one special. There was comfort in the thought.
>
> It was nonsense, the very idea of his being brought low. After the things he'd seen; after all the shit he'd waded through. Frank White had vowed on just such a bright day that he would never lose control again; picture him doing so now, and for a mere woman.
>
> "Chin up, old lad."

Pity is not to be wasted on mere men and women —these monsters who murder, grunt, eat and defecate their way through the novel. Nor are words to be spent; for the best that most of the characters can manage is a line in snappy clichés, continuous proof that ordinary language is inadequate to the terrible, inhuman strain which ordinary life puts upon it. The murderer Belsey, pencilling "No more words", has at least accepted the logic of his condition.

BAILEY HAS STACKED the cards heavily against himself; he has created a society which is very nearly novelist-proof, a domain of unfeeling in which Frank White—whose name ironically suggests both virtue and moral colourlessness—is at home, but in which the conventional subtleties and sympathies of fiction are hopelessly lost. Bailey calls this terrible place London, but there are other clues to its identity.

> This part of London was like a waste land now. Towers would rise here soon, divided by squares for the winter winds to lurch across.
>
> —Am I still in the world?
>
> She saw him.
>
> —Yes.

The question is a central one, and it hangs over the whole novel. This savage, fallen city, in which life is held so cheaply, might just as well be hell, and the characters tormented shades under the pathetic illusion that they are still in the world. Bailey repeatedly calls London "the wasteland" and "the oven", and makes Frank White "whistle" on his progress through it. Is that noise the sound of a falling soul, and why is White's redemptive angel so solemnly sentimentalised, out of J. M. Barrie by the Earl's Court Road?

Bailey has borrowed a great deal from Eliot in *A Distant Likeness*, but there is little of Eliot's Christianity here. The wasteland imagery, the Sweeneylike brutish lassitude of Frank White, the disgusted cataloguing of physical details, the dialogues forlornly echoing like words from beyond the grave—all these hark back, precisely and intentionally, to Eliot's poem. Even the structure of the novel, instinct with the abbreviated, broken rhythms of nervous breakdown, looks back to the atomised epic shape of *The Waste Land*; and Bailey's cockneys, chirping in the flames, are cousins to Lil and May and Bill and Albert in "A Game of Chess." Yet Bailey's hints of salvation and apocalypse have a shrill (and, I think, deliberate) lack of conviction. This is a waste land which can stay the same for ever, where characters will simply repeat charades of feeling, where angels are only good for one-night stands. It is hell without purpose or divinity, a penny-dreadful world. The title of the novel has been taken by most reviewers to refer to the final resemblance between the cop and his criminal suspect. It also suggests that there is rather more than a distant likeness between this thuggish place, with its coarse dehumanised hero and its crude distorted plot, and the world we actually live in.

But Bailey is not ranting about a millennium; he is, before anything else, a close observer of the ordinary, even a novelist of manners. There is nothing in the book which is not shockingly commonplace: the talk, beautifully caught and rendered, is of the kind one can hear at any time in a bar or on a street; details of food, gossip, simple moralism. The people are not monsters: they are much the same as the men and women who elect governments, sit on juries, read newspapers, make and break families. Yet, as the fragments of their lives come together in *A Distant Likeness*, we watch them composing into a horror story. We have heroised toughness, indifference, pride, self-control; Bailey has stared coolly at that place to which those virtues lead, and has recognised it as hell. If the novel is not, in the *T.L.S.* reviewer's phrase, "full-blooded", it is because the shades who inhabit it, grilling in the oven of the contemporary world, have been long drained of blood and feeling. It might be good to have a novel prosy with compassion, rich in motivation and complex sympathies; but it may not be possible.

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

With Brandt in Jerusalem

Germans & Jews

By H. U. Kempski

NOT UNTIL THE END of her set speech did the heavy serious expression vanish from Golda Meir's face. She gave a ghost of a smile. Her commanding voice, which itself partly explains her ability to govern, took on a softer tone. For almost half an hour and without a note Golda, as everybody calls her, had been paying tribute to the German Chancellor as a statesman whose peace policy was calculated to open new horizons for the world. Then suddenly she stopped. The audience stared at her as if spell-bound, as if they expected something out of the ordinary, something which could only be said by this old woman who rules the Promised Land with the unchallenged authority of a strong man.

Then, softly and with a smile, Golda let fall a word which no public figure had so far dared to utter since the state of Israel was formed. She spoke of "friendship" between the Jewish people and Germany. Of course others have referred to reconciliation and good relations but in a way which made it clear that, for as long as anyone could foresee, the West German Federal Republic would have to appear in the role of repentant sinner. Golda Meir mentioned the obligation not to forget the past and in doing so she referred neither to Germans nor to Nazis. Then she turned to Willy Brandt and offered for the future *"Friendship based on honour and integrity,"* and she raised her glass of champagne to drink to such a future. The thunderous applause seemed to contain an element of pent-up emotion. It was the applause of men who found it hard to believe that the sense of blood-guilt still existing between Israel and Germany could ever permit of *Freundschaft.*

HANS ULRICH KEMPSKI *is one of Germany's leading foreign correspondents. He has recently been in China (interviewing Chou En-lai), in Washington (covering Watergate) and in Israel with Chancellor Willy Brandt's entourage. He is a senior editor of the "Suddeutsche Zeitung" in Munich.*

Some three hundred guests had been invited. Three enormous highly-coloured Chagall tapestries gazed down upon them as they sat in the great lobby of the Knesset on Givat-Ram, the Jerusalem hillock overlooking the austere countryside where Israel's parliament has made its home in a concrete structure looking like a temple. In honour of Brandt, the first visiting head of government from a country of international status, the lobby had been decked with pink roses. A hundred-strong choir from a *kibbutz* sang patriotic songs. And Golda, who usually goes about in a plain dress looking like some widow who has no more to hope for from life, had put on a shimmering gown, a long embroidered brocade robe with golden sandals and a great string of pearls.

DURING THE PRECEDING BANQUET she had done her chain-smoking utmost to be an entertaining hostess to the Chancellor. She seemed to be trying to show that she felt flattered to receive a visitor who, in her eyes, possessed virtues which he did not even realise himself. In none of his visits to foreign capitals had Brandt heard such eulogies. Golda seemed to assume that she and Brandt looked at the stage of world history from the same viewpoint; she described the Chancellor's "Eastern policy" as a model for the settlement of disputes in other crisis areas. A sense of realities, prudent compromise, and a readiness to make sacrifices (she said) were the factors which might bring about a peace settlement in the Middle East too.

Such views had never before been expressed in this country in all the six years since Zion's soldiers scored their *blitz* victory over the Arab hordes. On the contrary, only a year ago Golda Meir was making no secret of her scepticism over Brandt's *Ostpolitik*. At the time she was afraid that the Chancellor's efforts towards a *détente* in Central Europe would free the Soviet Union to become more active in the Mediterranean area. Since this did not happen, since in fact there are now indications that the Russians and Americans are engaged in a common search for some peace initiative in the Middle East, Golda is busy building up a fresh position for herself. Nevertheless there is little to show that she is prepared to recommend Brandt's recipe as a model for Israel. She clearly has the Arabs in mind—*they* are the people who should imitate Brandt.

DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS before the Chancellor's arrival the country's malleable press had been preparing its 3.3 million inhabitants for Golda's banquet speech. Public opinion seemed to be ripe for a change. The majority of

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Israelis have reached the point where they appeared ready to make their peace with the Germans. Recent opinion polls showed the majority of the population to be in favour of Brandt's visit. The overall organisation of Victims of Nazism was even prepared to call off any organised counter-demonstration such as those to which all prominent visitors from Germany have been subjected hitherto. There was barely a threat to the Chancellor's security. It was nevertheless safeguarded by an élite squad of soldiers who followed him with machine-guns and automatic rifles at the ready as if a pitched battle might start at any moment.

It was such good flying weather that Brandt's *Luftwaffe* plane reached the coast of Israel ahead of time. It circled over Tel Aviv for half-an-hour. Stretched along its five-mile beach packed with sun-tanned citizenry, the city lay there shining in the sun, apparently holding out the promise of all sorts of doubtful pleasures. The bird's eye view, however, stimulating though it may be to the imagination, is deceptive. The city may glitter in the sun, but it goes early to its bed. Its life is governed by European petty-bourgeois conventions, by the modest level of average earnings, and by the rules of an austere pioneer ideology which brands luxury as a sin. The only truly oriental attribute of this city is its name. Tel Aviv means "Hill of Spring."

Weltwoche (Zurich)

Brandt flew on to Jerusalem by helicopter. His four-day programme opened in Yad Vashem, the colossal monument outside the city gates erected in memory of the six million murdered Jews. Brandt's hosts had promised that he would not be subjected to same treatment as that meted out to Walther Scheel, the German Foreign Minister, two years before; then an attempt had obviously been made to produce so great and unexpected a shock effect that the German would be ready to act as some kind of wheel-horse to the chariot of Israeli desires. Gideon Hausner, chief prosecutor at the Eichmann trial, had issued Scheel with an ultimatum: "You must leave it to us to judge the best methods of guaranteeing our survival. We assume that you will support us, both politically and morally, in all aspects of international life. That is what we expect."

This time the prosecutor remained silent. Nevertheless, although the original programme had been cancelled, Brandt was given to understand, shortly before his arrival, that he would be expected to attend a service of commemoration. It was read in Hebrew—and the translation was into English only. In the great circular memorial built of solid rock no syllable of German had yet been heard. To break down this taboo Brandt insisted that he be permitted to speak a few words of German in this place. The memorial's Board of Curators indicated only an hour before Brandt's arrival that it was prepared to accede to this request.

"I will read," Brandt said, "from Psalm 103, verses 8–16." He read from a slightly amended Martin Luther translation beginning with the words:

"Barmherzig und gnädig ist der Herr, geduldig und von Grosse Güte; er wird nicht immer hadern noch ewiglich Zorn halten. . . ."

"The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering and of great goodness. He will not always be chiding neither keepeth He His anger for ever. . . ."

There stood a man reading slowly, loudly, and clearly from the psalms, with Prussian simplicity and the voice of a Protestant preacher. Never has Brandt been able to illustrate so clearly, almost visibly, that prestige is dependent not upon action but upon influence.

NATURALLY HE KNEW THAT, even twenty-eight years after the end of the war, "normalisation" is still a dirty word for many people in Israel. Neither 14 billion marks in reparations aid nor the establishment of a democratic Federal Republic based on the rule of law had changed this. The Chancellor understood this perfectly. In his view, however, despite all material normalisation, certain unfortunate tendencies still existed that were prejudicial to spiritual and intellectual normalisation; their purpose was to keep alive the political and material expectations stemming from a "special relationship" with the Federal Republic. This, too, Brandt said to Golda Meir without mincing his words until finally he had brought her

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to see that there must be a factor more potent than all the problems dividing the two nations—a mutual determination no longer to allow the past and the present to overlap, no longer to allow common sense to be overlaid by emotion.

Subsequently, in his after-dinner speech, he insisted that he had neither the authority nor the power to act as the Middle East's peacemaker; with many shades of emphasis, however, he continued to repeat his thesis that an assured peace is only possible if people are prepared to forgo their illusions. One sentence stood out, and he had discussed it at length with Golda beforehand: "Stabilisation of peaceful conditions in Europe is, in my view, itself a contribution to the security of our neighbours in the Mediterranean and Middle East areas."

The background to this sentence was the Chancellor's concept that the process of *détente* initiated in Europe can only achieve lasting success if peace and security are established in the Mediterranean area as well. Brandt regards Europe as the buttress of the Mediterranean countries. It is primarily Europe's requirement for an uninterrupted supply of energy which makes it essential for the European community to work for relaxation of tension in the Mediterranean. Brandt's advice was that, in the light of her military superiority, Israel should be prepared to adjust her rigid concept of her claims and, at least in so far as diplomacy was concerned, to be more generous and forthcoming.

THIS BEING THE BACKGROUND, it is easier to understand why Defence Minister Dayan hit upon the idea of avoiding a meeting with the Chancellor. It was aimed at Golda Meir, not Brandt. According to the programme agreed between them separate discussions had been arranged for the Chancellor with Foreign Minister Eban, Finance Minister Sapir, Deputy Prime Minister Allon, but not with Dayan. Golda is prepared to use every method to eliminate the Defence Minister as her potential successor.

Allon too opposes Dayan because the latter aims to produce *faits accomplis* in Israel's sovereign territory, the size of which was trebled in a matter of a few hours during the Six-Day War. The recently published "Allon Plan", which already provides the guide-lines for Israeli settlement policy, visualises an arrangement satisfying the Israeli security requirements without at the same time including the majority of the Arab inhabitants in the state of Israel. In the internal political controversy over this plan Eban and Sapir have come out on the side of Allon. These three are held to be ready to compromise and are labelled "doves". They are, of course, rivals in the struggle for the succession to Golda Meir.

Reliable information indicates that both Brandt and Dayan were equally sorry not to meet each other. Dayan had let it be known that he was ready to talk to the Chancellor anywhere at any time but that he was not prepared to do so during some purely social occasion as Golda would have wished to compel him to do. On his side, for reasons of personal curiosity, Brandt was anxious to meet Dayan. He would have liked to make his acquaintance as the only man who seemed to be a sufficiently charismatic leader to cause the people to make those bold sacrifices necessary if Israel is to have a stable peace. Initially, however, Brandt did not think it wise to press to see Dayan. He had no wish to become involved in those internal conflicts of opinion nicknamed "the Jewish wars", the stubborn parliamentary battles waged by Israeli politicians, frequently equalling those of biblical history in all their self-mutilating bitterness. On the Friday, however, he let it be known that "I will nevertheless see Dayan." Dayan is known in Israel as the "Lone Wolf." His only calculable characteristic is his incalculability. The government party is increasingly inclined to write him off as an ageing maverick who had best keep himself out of politics. Dayan makes things easy for his enemies because he is no vote-catcher, because he keeps himself aloof from party politics and does not care if he appears unsociable, insulting or self-seeking. The complex traits in his character spoil his public image. The vast majority once revered him, confident in his magic as a warlord, but the trend of his popularity curve is now downwards and at present it stands around the 25% mark.

THE "LONE WOLF" has assembled enough troops in the Holy City to conceal from Brandt the true tempo of life there. It is true that upwards of 60% of Israelis still agree with their Defence Minister when he declares himself opposed to any plan involving relinquishment of even a yard of conquered territory. But, convinced of their continuing superiority, these men are finding it increasingly hard to believe in a threat which could endanger their existence. The previous permanent state of alert at home has given way to a mood which can only be described as apathy in face of the Arabs' warlike noises. The masses are far more concerned with the galloping inflation, paradoxically coupled with a rapid economic upswing known by people here as *boomchik*, a "boomlet", than with Dayan's speeches prophesying peril. People are beginning to suspect that he is keeping the crisis alive because he will only be satisfied with a peace which he has made himself.

AFTER HIS FIRST ROUND OF TALKS Brandt said: "I have no intention of going around in Jerusalem teaching people their business." This was his answer to one of the 153 journalists who had flown specially to Israel and who wanted to know

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more about a remark by Brandt made as a sort of interim conclusion: "The Middle East conflict and the problems of this region were naturally the subject with which we were particularly concerned." He added: "You may take it from a man who is no longer a youngster that reading is important, conversations are sometimes even more important, but direct personal impressions are often irreplaceable. . . ."

The evening before he had gathered a highly personal and unexpected impression. After Golda's banquet he had been taken aside by Teddy Kollek, the rumbustious mayor of Jerusalem. Golda, seventy-five years old and not too quick on her feet, had been unable to keep up with them as they hurried through the underground "Bible Treasury", where ancient copies of Holy Writ are kept under bullet-proof glass to show that the history of Jewry is no legend.

It was midnight before the two reappeared, clearly thinking that Golda would long since have gone to bed. But there she was, standing shivering in her golden sandals, still waiting for her guest from Germany. With a spontaneous expression of sympathy Willy Brandt offered her his arm and the old lady, ostensibly the undisputed ruler of the Promised Land, clung to it as if she had found a support which she did not wish to let go.

NIGHT FELL quickly. After a scorching hot day a tepid breeze blew across the lush lawns of the Arcadia Grand Hotel in Tel Aviv where 2,000 people were assembled to shake the German Chancellor's hand. They swarmed round the great swimming pool on which lanterns floated with bunches of red carnations between them, apparently suspended in mid-air. A pathway over fifty yards in length led past buffets and bars in vaulted arbours illuminated by coloured lights. Floodlights picked out white flagpoles carrying numerous little streamers in the German and Israeli colours. The sea sparkled under a bright yellow moon hanging in the sky like a great Chinese lantern; the waves foamed gently on to the hotel beach.

It was all like a romantic Hollywood film-set. Had it been so, there would be nothing more to say. The interest of this scene lay in the fact that it was more indicative than all the other functions of the fundamental change in relations between the Jewish and German states. In honour of Willy Brandt, Bonn's Ambassador in Tel Aviv (Jesko von Puttkamer) had invited 2,100 Israelis; in addition to the official leaders they included everyone of rank and influence in the political, cultural and economic life of the country. There had been about one hundred refusals, but practically everybody whose name counted had appeared. So lively and relaxed was the atmosphere that it seemed as if a vast change of heart had taken place since that first evening of the Chancellor's visit when Golda Meir had let fall the magic word "friendship."

Once more Golda was there, although not compelled by protocol. The evening before she had been the Chancellor's guest at a dinner given in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, for members of the government and other VIPs of the great city. Brandt was not in the habit of buttering up the Israelis but in his speech at this dinner he had hit upon words which earned him a round of applause with no trace of reserve. Without appearing to be over-pious, the Chancellor had said, he wished to deal with a question raised in one of the psalms—the question whether God could really spread a table in the desert. The Chancellor's answer was: "Yes, He clearly can." A little later he added that this country illustrated the truth of a phrase no longer applicable to the mass tourist trade, which tended only to reinforce preconceived notions—"Travel educates both the mind and the heart."

Such emotional pronouncements were the outcome of his stay in a *kibbutz*, one of those collectively defended villages in which some 4% of this people of 3.3 million voluntarily eke out an existence. Brandt's impressions from this Sabbath day's journey had by no means been fragmentary. During the return flight to Tel Aviv he had been able to judge the tenacious effort required to wrest new fertile territory from the desert. Brandt had flown along the old frontier line in a rocket-carrying "Sikorski 54," a military cargo helicopter. The whole time he had stood at a half-open cargo hatch taking in a picture which could leave no one unimpressed. On the Arab side an arid waste with poverty-stricken villages; on the Israeli side green fields, well-kept, thickly-populated villages with peach orchards and orange groves. At the Chancellor's request he was not taken over occupied territory. He did not even go as close to the Golan Heights on the Syrian frontier as his hosts would have liked—he was determined to avoid any step which could be taken as provocatory by the Arabs. He had no difficulty, however, in visualising the permanent military threat to Israel previously represented by the Golan Heights when he stayed twenty-four hours in the *kibbutz* of Ginossar on the shore of Lake Genesaret. Half the population of Ginossar, founded thirty-seven years ago, was of German-Jewish origin.

UP TO THIS TIME this *kibbutz* community had sternly refused to have contact of any sort with Germans. This taboo was abandoned, however, when the vast majority of the people of Ginossar decided to accept Brandt as a visitor. The decision was not taken lightly. The *kibbutz* movement, as

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a special form of democratic socialism, had been the hallmark of the state of Israel in the eyes of its founders; today it still provides more than its share of younger leaders, particularly in the army.

The impression left on Brandt by the people of Ginossar was quite the opposite of the proverbial uncompromising members of a *kibbutz*, sometimes ultra-chauvinist. Those the Chancellor met were quite different. Having realised that an "ideal peace" was not possible, they were in process of calling in question many of the old Israeli postulates. They ruminated philosophically on how to defend their own rights without infringing those of the enemy. In Ginossar, too, the Chancellor was handed documents of the terrible concentration camp period—and requested to autograph them as a reminder of this day when times had changed.

ONE OF THE CO-FOUNDERS of Ginossar is Yigal Allon, now Deputy Prime Minister. His position in the government rests upon the confidence placed in him by the "Old Guard", the *Palmach*, an élite self-defence organisation of Israeli settlers in Palestine, of which Allon was the commander. Brandt and the ex-general have become personal friends. In front of all the members of the *kibbutz* Allon addressed the Chancellor as "My dear friend and comrade." It is conceivable that there will now be a German-Israeli cultural agreement, something hitherto vetoed primarily by Allon. As a young major Allon had been in the trenches opposite a certain Egyptian Major Nasser. Brandt recalled that he had once heard President Nasser say: "With that man I would make peace."

There is, however, another personality to be considered, one who, if circumstances so required, would not hesitate to slaughter the most sacred of cows. He is Pinchas Sapir, a sort of super-Minister for Finance, Industry and Commerce and one of the most powerful men in the Labour Party which has governed the country for so long. His aim is a purely Jewish state, as far as possible free of Arab minorities.

Anyone in the know in Israel swears that, if Golda ever resigned, Sapir would be her successor, provided he wanted it. At one time everything seemed to indicate that Sapir liked power but not high office. When Brandt received him the Chancellor took care to have witnesses present. Sapir is said to be adept at gathering in ever more millions for the support of Israel; he is known as "Mr Goldfinger."

THE CENTRAL SUBJECT of all Brandt's private discussions was the Middle East—at first sight an odd fact since Brandt has no sort of standing in the matter. His halo as a political mediator, however, and his reputation as one of the generally best-informed statesmen were such that the idea of Brandt having a deciding voice in a peace settlement gathered force daily.

He was careful to avoid making himself ridiculous by over-estimating his influence. He persisted, however, in his self-chosen role of spokesman for Europe bent on exerting a moderating influence on the "hawks", trying to persuade them not to counter all future peace proposals with rigid negative formulae. The main background to his arguments was the assurance recently given him by Brezhnev that, if a balanced comprehensive peace settlement could be arrived at, Moscow would be ready to guarantee it together with Washington. This explains why the Chancellor was continually repeating the admonition: "The counterpart to peace in Europe must be a peace settlement in this area, so closely linked to us by geography, history and interest."

Undoubtedly one of the Chancellor's subsidiary aims was to give a new twist to the Israeli thesis that the German reconciliation policy should serve as an example to the Arabs. This he did with particular clarity in Beth Berl, a building estate near Tel Aviv where the Israeli Labour Party's training centre is housed. He spoke to some 400 members of the government party's Executive Council and, under the chairmanship of Golda Meir, they gave him as warm a welcome as he usually gets from his Social Democrat supporters in West-Berlin.

Michael Holroyd

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Brandt's audience became visibly more thoughtful as he hammered into them the fact that the Federal Republic had reaped good results from its resolute peace policy. For many people, however, he said, this had entailed a painful abandonment of their illusions and necessitated a readiness to overcome the inhibitions stemming from taboos—"Many of my fellow-countrymen felt this to be a national sacrifice. We must, however, face realities if we wish to improve them. . . ."

In the subsequent discussion there was only one note of criticism. Brandt was asked whether he might not be suspected of being in danger of allowing the Arabs to impose their friendship upon him. He laughed sarcastically and somewhat patronisingly before replying with some asperity (it sounds blunter in English than in German): "Have friendship imposed on me? I won't even stand having enmity imposed on me."

During his two-and-a-half hours in Beth Berl, Brandt took the opportunity to act the pedagogue in another connection. This he did because he knew that, within the Israeli Labour Party, democracy was on the wane with the result that the Israeli youth was coming to regard politics with scepticism. He did not refer to the matter directly; he merely said that he was by no means unhappy over the fact that in Germany the young Social Democrats were no longer prepared to accept the authority of a party leader or a chancellor without question or examination. "They seem," he said, "to be not merely generations but worlds removed from the picture of the typical Prussian German—once described by Heinrich Heine as 'so ramrod stiff that one would think they had swallowed the stick with which they had once been beaten'. . . ."

Golda, who is used to having even senior ministers obey her every glance, did not appear to feel that this was aimed at her. On the contrary, she looked at Brandt almost adoringly; she was openly flirting with him. As the days passed and she became increasingly at ease with him, she seemed to have a new sense of well-being. Most people are already saying that she will not resign after the autumn elections. Instead, they say, she wants to govern until she can be the one to make peace. Already she seems to be following in Brandt's wake when she talks of the burdens of victory, of readiness to compromise, of close cooperation with neighbours now still hostile. Is she really in process of abandoning her position of defiance? Has she lost the "Massada complex" generally attributed to her?

BRANDT'S TRIP TO MASSADA on the Monday was the last he made by air—it might have been his last by any method owing to a faulty and very hard landing by the helicopter. Massada is the name of a fortress situated on a rocky plateau between the Desert and the Dead Sea. Here, precisely 1900 years ago, the Jews made their last desperate stand against expulsion by the Romans. When Massada finally fell, the remaining defenders committed suicide—several hundred men, women, and children. Remnants of the fortifications have been preserved and are regarded as a national shrine, a token of the new Jewish state's power of resistance. "Never again will Massada fall"—Golda Meir's saying is everywhere repeated.

SHORTLY BEFORE the Chancellor flew back to Bonn he was awarded Israel's highest honour. The Weizmann Institute made him a Doctor *honoris causa,* only once awarded before, and never before to a foreigner. In his acceptance speech Brandt said :"I consider such confidence in the political leadership of the Federal Republic of Germany to be the true reward of this visit." He has said that he undertook this journey with some trepidation. Now he is curiously sad at the thought that, after a successful visit to Israel, there is nowhere else in the world where, as head of government, he will have to meet the challenge of breaking down anti-German barriers.

But he is anxious about something else too, and he indicated as much to Israel's intellectual élite in the Weizmann Institute. He feels that for many foreigners he has already become a sort of monument and he fears that, even at home, he may not be able to live up to his legendary reputation. As if to shake himself free, he behaved in front of these scholars with a deliberate lack of solemnity, saying: "You will forgive me if I say that the encounter with your fellow-countryman Ephraim Kishon brings to my mind the fact that compliments have never killed an author. Are we quite sure of this?"

As he took off from Tel Aviv in his *Luftwaffe* plane he left no communiqué behind him. The Israelis regret this, but the Chancellor wanted it that way. In this he was supported by Paul Frank, the State Secretary of the Bonn Foreign Ministry; the increasing addiction to the production of communiqués is liable to create difficulties rather than contribute to political progress.

In order, however, to pay the Israelis a compliment as straightforward as it was sincere, the Chancellor spoke two words of Hebrew which, he maintained, he had picked up during his four-day visit—*Kol Hakavot.* Though normally used as a casual phrase, Willy Brandt wished these words to be taken as an expression of his appreciation of all the remarkable achievements by the men of the Promised Land. "I mean these two words", he said, "to be taken as literally as possible." *Kol Hakavot* means "With all respect."

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

Dostoevsky's Realism?

By Michael Egan & David Craig

IN HIS DEFENCE of what he calls Dostoevsky's "historic veracity" in *The Devils* [ENCOUNTER, March 1973], Joseph Frank ends up facing in two directions at once. On the one hand he claims the novel is "a work of art and not either literal history or reportage"; but, on the other, he asserts that Dostoevsky "based his political plot on a dramatic actualisation of the tactics and aims of the Nechayev movement." Having retraced the well-known parallels between Nechayev's *Catechism* and some of Peter Verkhovensky's outbursts, he concludes: "Sources and parallels for every other politico-ideological feature of *The Devils*, even those that seem the most extravagant and the least credible, can be found. . . ."

But, first, *The Devils* is not an historical novel after the manner of Scott, as Frank suggests. He is curiously silent about many of the details surrounding its composition. In fact it was written straight from the newspaper on Dostoevsky's breakfast table, as a propaganda exercise in support of Czarism and the Greek Orthodox Church. Further, like many 19th-century novels it was serialised, and began publication in the reactionary Moscow journal, the *Russian Messenger*, in February 1870. These points are important, because many of the "facts" about revolutionary organisations, the wording of leaflets, and the circumstances of Ivanov's murder, closely follow accounts of police witnesses at the show trial of 79 young nihilists (none of whom was Nechayev) in July 1871. In other words, Dostoevsky placed the convolutions of his story virtually at the service of the Russian state prosecutor and conservative daily press. The novel *is* a dramatic actualisation, but of the case for the prosecution in a Czarist police-state. It is an attempt to render that case credible.

Publicly, Dostoevsky put a bold front on it. He told Maykov that he wished to be "even nearer reality" than he had been with *Crime and Punishment*, and "directly concerned with the most important contemporary question." In his letter to the Crown Prince he claimed the book to be "almost an historical study" through which he sought "to explain the possibility in our strange society of such monstrous phenomena as the Nechayev movement." (Frank quotes the first observation, laying great stress on the qualification, but keeps quiet about the rest which contradicts his reading.) In his opinion these phenomena were not accidental but "the direct consequences of the great splitting away of all Russian education from the native and original bases of Russian life." The Czar will have read these words with great pleasure, since his own view of the current discontent (viciously suppressed at the time by the feared Third Section of police, who had initiated a terror campaign in 1866) was that the universities had become centres of sedition. He was looking to his new Education Minister, Dmitri Tolstoy, to ensure that in future only religion and the classics were studied.

Privately, however, Dostoevsky was less confident. The effort of bending reality to accord with his prejudices was proving almost too much for him. He confided to S. A. Ivanovna that he was "unable to cope" with the difficulty, adding: "I am turning out decided trash, but to discard it is impossible because I like the thought too much!" In April 1870, he admitted to Strakhov that his book was becoming a political pamphlet: "I am anxious to express certain ideas, even if it ruins my novel as a work of art. . . . Let it turn out to be only a pamphlet, but I shall say everything to the last word." And to Maykov: "What I am writing now is a tendentious thing. Let the nihilists and Westerners howl that I am a REACTIONARY! To hell with them."

Our conclusions here are, first, that a novelist in this frame of mind is unlikely to deal objectively or accurately with his material, and secondly, that *The Devils* is not an historical novel like *Ivanhoe*. On the contrary, it offers itself as an eye-witness account of contemporary events, and therefore the standards of accuracy we should demand of it are the same as those we expect, and find, in a novel such as Silone's *Fontamara*.

Frank further asserts that Dostoevsky limits his attack to Nechayev, not being concerned to smear the radical movement as a whole. But this is obviously untrue since the novel repeatedly claims that Peter is working under the direct control of Marx and the *Internationale* (pp. 250, 419, 459, Penguin edition). More seriously, however, Dostoevsky widens his attack to include all critics of Czarism and Greek Orthodoxy, so that terrorism, socialism, atheism, nihilism, liberalism and even leniency by prosecutors and juries, are all viewed as of a piece.

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AS IS WELL KNOWN, *The Devils* is based on the parable of the Gadarene swine. The passage from *Luke* viii, 32–36, is cited in full twice in the novel, apart from its celebration in the title, first as its superscription, and finally as Dostoevsky's central pronouncement on the condition of Russia. The judgment is placed in the mouth of the dying Stepan Verkhovensky, who is in a religious ecstasy. He draws "*une comparaison*," the burden of which is that Russia is like the sick man of the parable. Once the evil spirits have been exorcised it will sit again at the feet of Christ. The devils are all the woes and bad men of the day, including "Peter—*et les autres avec lui*—and perhaps I at the head of them all." (pp. 647–8).

Dostoevsky rests his entire political analysis on this absurd proposition. All the major characters in the novel are apparently in the grip of a collective insanity. A mindless "rabble" has come to the surface like "scum," and is under the control of "so-called progressives," themselves manipulated by the agents of the *Internationale*. All sorts of "worthless individuals" such as "wretched little Jews" mysteriously gain "the upper hand" (pp. 458–60.) But the illness vanishes as incomprehensibly as it comes. Such causes as Dostoevsky is able to discover are located in individual acts of madness or in gross derelictions of duty which can only be explained by hypothesising lunacy. This is the essence of von Lembke's collapse at the critical moment, and what lies behind Peter's tirade setting forth his programme of abject baseness and gratuitous violence. It's just demonology, in other words: literally devils who operate from a set of motives simultaneously obscure and precise (wreaking Evil), endowed with a strange power to corrupt but vanquishable at the appearance of the True Cross. All Dostoevsky's positives in this connection are spelled out in Shatov's interview with Stavrogin, when reason, "half-science," atheism and socialism are attacked and Greek Orthodoxy is offered as the only true religion (pp. 253–63).

THE POINT IS that Dostoevsky was unable to depict his central figures as anything other than insane, because no sane people could have been credibly shown as behaving and speaking in the way they do in *The Devils*. His commitment to the notion of insanity is his commitment to untruth. On no other basis could the distortions with which the book abounds have been presented. What we have in mind here, for example, is that long catalogue of public servants which Peter claims are really "one of ours." What the author means is that "they" are really "one of them." No revolutionary atheist, insane or not, would speak of a teacher laughing with his pupils "at their God" and—sentimental image—"at their cradle." Equally, though he might deride the judical institutions of the state, he would not attack public prosecutors who tremble in court because they are "not sufficiently progressive," or juries who "acquit all criminals without distinction" (pp. 419–22). The real speaking voice in this passage is Dostoevsky's.

A crucial dimension of the novel which Frank overlooks is the way Dostoevsky widens his attack even beyond radicalism, insinuating a continuity of ideas, and therefore of political responsibility, between liberalism and Peter's insanity. We have already quoted Stepan, the representative liberal, placing himself at the head of the infecting devils. Dostoevsky also attaches an emblematic significance to his fatherhood of Peter, and of course to the fact that he was Stavrogin's tutor. But Dostoevsky is quite willing to be much more specific. In Chapter IV Shatov (who, as the embodiment of Ivanov and a disaffected nihilist with religious leanings, speaks for the author) dismisses "our Russian liberal" as "a flunkey before anything else. He's only waiting for the opportunity of polishing someone's boots" (p. 147). By Part II Dostoevsky is prepared to reveal just whose boots they are, making Stepan admit that the liberalism of his generation paved the way for nihilism. He contemplates Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* in despair, confessing that it is "our idea—yes, ours!" but "distorted" and "mutilated." Still, "we were the first to plant it, to nurture it" (p. 308). Earlier Dostoevsky had been quite explicit about which liberals he had in mind, mentioning by name Herzen, Granovsky, Belinsky, and Chaadayev (p. 22). Finally, he allows Shatov—now come to God and about to be martyred by Peter—to make everything limpid. He identifies directly the "enemies of life . . . of individuality and freedom" with the "dead" and "rotten" ideas of liberalism. Notions of equality—"envious equality, equality without self-esteem"—lead straight to Robespierre's white terror (p. 575). Does Frank believe that this "politico-ideological feature" of the novel has a basis in fact?

THE ESSENTIAL CRITIQUE of Dostoevsky's portrayal of the condition of Russia arising out of this, of course, is that there is a vast gulf between what is alleged about the dangerous revolutionary professionalism of the radicals, like Peter Verkhovensky, and the silly tittering demons we are actually shown. Peter is a posturing, blustering fool, who flounders in the mud behind Stavrogin almost comic in his desperation to wreak havoc for its own sake. In a word, the danger he presents lies all in the allegation: it is never successfully dramatised. Even Dostoevsky was

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aware of this, and it puzzled him. He wrote to Katkov: "To my personal amazement this character developed in my hands into a half-comic character. . . ." But of course it would be the case, granting the absurdity of the whole proposition Dostoevsky was committing himself to work with. The entire political side of the novel, which is to say most of it, fails desperately in consequence.

A Reply

MESSRS EGAN AND CRAIG seem to disagree with my article, but for reasons that I find difficult to understand. My purpose was a strictly limited one: to show that none of the incidents or events used by Dostoevsky on the political level of *The Devils*, that none of the plans, ideas or actions of the revolutionary plot, exceed the bounds of verisimilitude. I attempted to prove this by comparing the entire political intrigue (not only "some of Peter Verkhovensky's outbursts") with the documents at Dostoevsky's disposal about the Nechayev affair. Nothing said by my critics addresses itself to this argument, or refutes it in any way. Hence, I see very little to answer, and take the silence of my critics on the main point as an implicit admission of the strength of my position.

However, my critics are obviously perturbed at the idea that *The Devils* could possibly have any historical veracity; this no doubt conflicts too severely with their own ideas about Revolution and revolutionists. And in attempting to circumvent this uncomfortable fact, they raise a number of issues on which I should like to comment.

1. Their first point, if I understand them rightly, is that even if Dostoevsky's use of the facts is legitimate, such facts are only "the case for the prosecution in a Czarist police-state." Hence the novel is biased because the trial was a frame-up.

This is ingenious but unconvincing. The *Catechism*, the leaflets, the murder of Ivanov, all existed independently of the testimony of "police witnesses." The letter of Bakunin I cited—surely not a "police witness"—supports and confirms all the accusations made against Nechayev. They were also all accepted by Marx and Engels, whose biting account of the affair is much more damning even than Dostoevsky's novel (*Werke*, Berlin, 1962, vol. 18, 396-441).

2. Messrs. Egan and Craig cite a number of letters indicating that Dostoevsky did not approach his material in an equable frame of mind, and was bitterly biased against the radicals and their movement—at least as reflected in the Nechayev case. This is certainly true; it was so stated by me; and Dostoevsky never claimed otherwise. It is all the more remarkable, under these circumstances, that his manipulation of the material did not exceed the bounds of verisimilitude as I defined it—that is, an extrapolation of the actualities and possibilities contained in the Nechayev evidence.

Incidentally, all the letters cited refer to the *first* idea for the novel, before the inclusion of Stavrogin as part of the plan. They do not refer to the book as finally written; this became much less a "pamphlet" as Dostoevsky's ideas developed.

3. My critics make much of the religious symbolism of the book, which comprehensibly does not please them at all; but since this was not included in the scope of my argument, I shall not discuss it here. I have dealt with it at length elsewhere ("The Masks of Stavrogin," *Sewanee Review*, Oct.-Dec., 1969, pp. 660-691).

They object, however, to Dostoevsky's image of the revolution advocated by Nechayev as the handiwork of devils and madmen. Let me cite for them a passage from Herzen's *Letters to an old Comrade*, written—just as was Dostoevsky's novel—as a response to the revelations of the Nechayev affair. The "old comrade" is Bakunin.

> "The savage clamours exhorting people to close their books, to abandon science and to engage in an absurd battle of destruction, belongs to the wildest and worst demagogy. It always provokes *the unleashing of the worst passions*." (Italics in text.)

In any case, there is something astonishingly naïve, but also rather touching, in the belief that revolutionists are always sane and reasonable people.

4. Far from being an invention of Dostoevsky's (as my critics apparently believe), the continuity between the Russian Liberalism of the 1840s and the Radicalism of the 1860s (culminating in Nechayev) is one of the commonplaces of Russian cultural history. Let me cite another letter of Herzen, the father of Russian Socialism, to Bakunin (30 May, 1867):

> "I am sending you the brochure of Serno-Solovievich. He's insolent and a fool; but what's most deplorable is that the majority of the Russian youth are the *same*, and it's we who have contributed to make them so." (Italics in text.)

The Nechayev affair occurred a year or two later; and Dostoevsky, in explaining the symbolism of the novel to Maikov (9/21 October, 1870), writes:

> "The devils have emerged from Russian man to enter into the Nechayevs, Serno-Solovievichs, etc."

Dostoevsky had certainly read the brochure to which Herzen refers, and had simply dramatised Herzen's response—which he could not possibly have known.

Joseph Frank

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LETTERS

Wiesenthal's "Columbus"

I GATHER from the way that Dr Gerhard Prause phrases his remarks [ENCOUNTER, April, p.61], that he regards it as inherently unlikely that Columbus's interpreter, Luis de Torres, should have known "Chaldean." The name certainly has an unfamiliar ring about it nowadays, but Chaldean was the usual term employed at the time (and indeed until much later) to designate what we call Aramaic and Syriac. This man was, therefore, an expert in the Semitic languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic. It would be quite normal for a good Hebrew scholar to have "Chaldean" as well.

To take along a man with such linguistic training was really quite a sensible decision to make. Arabic would be a good trade language for the coast of Africa (and also for the Indian Ocean). Hebrew, if one believed it to have been man's original tongue (spoken by Adam and Eve in the Garden), was as likely as any other to turn out useful when venturing into the unknown.

L. P. HARVEY

Department of Spanish,
Queen Mary College,
University of London

THERE MUST BE something important about my book if you use nearly three precious pages in order to try to "disprove" it [ENCOUNTER, April].

I would have hoped that Dr Prause would occupy himself especially with the new research that the book presents: namely, the connection between the journeys of Columbus and the hope of the Jews finally to make contact with the ten tribes of Israel, as well as with the analysis of all the absurdities about the personality of Columbus which open up possibilities for a new interpretation. Unfortunately, my expectations were not realised. He did not take up the two main subjects of this book, or at least only superficially.

I have to note that he did not read, or not thoroughly, the biography of Columbus by Salvador de Madariaga which is generally regarded as the standard work. Otherwise he would have found the fact confirmed by Madariaga that Columbus wanted his crew to be on board by 11 p.m. I think that we can rely on Madariaga.

As to the "semi-falsification," in a literal sense he is right. But I think I can take the liberty of omitting whole phrases of formal politeness about the Catholic Kings and start with the order given to Columbus. To call such an omission a "semi-falsification" is hard.

As to the question of financing, I think he overlooked what I say in my book on p. 170—how Santangel arranged it, what personal risk he accepted, and that the loan which was free of interest had been paid back years later. The sad circumstances of that time—persecutions and *autos-da-fé*, denunciations and envy at the Court—would not really lead one to suspect "business" in such a dubious affair.

But thanks to Dr Prause's critique, I must acknowledge one mistake. I wrote, as he noted, that Torres, Columbus's interpreter, spoke Hebrew, Arabic, and a bit of Chaldee. I depended here on Washington Irving and his voluminous work about Columbus which he wrote 150 years ago. Enclosed please find a photocopy of this part of Irving's book. Torres in fact spoke Hebrew and Chaldee and a bit of Arabic.

I wrote on p. 150 that at that time not everybody was definitely convinced that the world was a globe, and that the aversion of Portuguese sailors to sailing westward in the direction of endless waters was connected with this. This view changed, of course, after the successful oceanic voyages. But Dr Prause misunderstands me if he thinks I state that it was the aim of these voyages to confirm this fact.

A part of my book is devoted to my thesis about the search for the Ten Tribes and the investigations about the descent and the religion of the Indios prompted by Columbus's voyage; it further considers the quarrels of the Spaniards and the Italians, who would both like to claim Columbus as their compatriot, and also the probability of his Jewish origins.

But I do agree that "the Incorrigibles" will consider this book some kind of confirmation of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. For nearly 2000 years the Jewish people have given the world—to the displeasure of those "Incorrigibles"—outstanding figures of scholarship and science. Let me mention only Moses and Jesus, Marx, Einstein, Freud, among many others. And may we hope that we shall find in future Jewish generations great men who will give the world new impulses and important achievements, whether those "Incorrigibles" like it or not.

SIMON WIESENTHAL

Vienna

SIMON WIESENTHAL'S COMPLAINT that I did not devote sufficient attention to the new material in his book is illogical. It was enough to examine the points on which he based his theory—in other words, its foundation. It is because this foundation carries no weight that his—otherwise far from uninteresting—theory hovers in mid-air.

1. Wiesenthal claims that Columbus stood on the quay-side at Palos on the evening of 2 August 1492 and personally checked that all members of the expedition went aboard by 11 p.m. This personally supervised embarkation and its timing (one hour before all Jews had to leave the country) are taken by Wiesenthal as major supports for his theory of Columbus's "secret mission". Unfortunately, there is no historical evidence, either for personal supervision or for the order to be on board by 11 p.m. Not even Madariaga, whom Wiesenthal cites as his authority, makes any such reference.

2. Columbus's log ("In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ") opens with a list, more than a page long, of events that had occurred in 1492 prior to his date of departure. The expulsion of the Jews is the last item on that list. To assert that the log opens with a reference to the expulsion (and to fashion this, too, into a theoretical building-block) is more than a mere omission of introductory courtesies.

3. That the interpreter Luis de Torres probably spoke better Hebrew than Arabic (Columbus states

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that he had a command of Hebrew and Chaldean and could speak "some Arabic") makes no essential difference. Wiesenthal's deduction that he addressed the Indians in Hebrew remains rash.

4. It is equally rash of Wiesenthal to read a "secret mission" of Columbus into Santangel's financial involvement.

Wiesenthal seems to have a penchant for jumping to conclusions, as the beginning of his letter indicates. The fact that ENCOUNTER allotted nearly three pages to a critical discussion of his book is surely no measure whatever of its importance.

GERHARD PRAUSE

Hamburg

The Real Danger of Watergate

A Dissenting Opinion—By HERB GREER

TRYING TO WRITE SENSE about Watergate is like clearing one's throat into the teeth of a howling typhoon. So much peculiarly intense malice reeking through the whole affair numbs the judgment: it's sweeter if one enjoys the sensuous thrill of just drifting with the wind. The few who *have* tried to buck it stick to neat points about "lynch-law", or like Stewart Alsop in *Newsweek*, ooze a general discomfort. The grotesque drivel of Mary McCarthy in *The Observer*, misinterpreting at least one incident in the hearings, plus evoking "the final solution" in a way that makes one gag with disgust, is probably the worst from those who have *not* tried to buck the wind. *R*'s column in your July issue is not quite so bad, but silly enough.

It is pseudo-historical waffle to say that there has been a "profound change . . . in the character of the American Presidency in recent years." Andrew Jackson defied the Supreme Court, Theodore Roosevelt defied Congress. These men and others used the Presidency as much more than a *primus inter pares* of the "balanced" powers in the government. Lincoln began fighting the Civil War without even calling Congress into session; he set up a draft before Congress authorised it; and he suspended *habeas corpus* without Congressional ratification. He also "pledged the consent of the United States and paid out money without appropriation." (*cf.* Walter Lippmann, in *The Essential Lippmann*, p. 245.) As Lippmann goes on to say:

> ". . . when Lincoln was dead, the pendulum swung and the country had inflicted on it a dictatorship of Congress which brought about the black history of reconstruction. . . . We have not found a way to give the President his necessary powers without impairing the control of Congress. And we have not found a way to give Congress control without depriving the President of essential power. This difficulty can be resolved, but only by the display of self-restraint, objectivity of mind, and magnanimity which are rare indeed in public life."

As for the President-as-monarch, that is, pardon me, sciolistic garbage. The President does not, nor can he rule like a monarch, nor even exercise power like one. If Watergate proves anything it proves that. Further, a monarchy is filled by birth, held for life, and vacated only by death, abdication, or forcible deposition. The Presidency is not quite like that. (Kennedy did *not*, *R* should be told, proclaim himself a Berliner. He said that *Ich bin ein Berliner*, like *civis romanus sum* in the ancient world, was the proudest boast a man could make in our times. He pointed to Berlin as representing the "free world", not to himself as representing Berlin.)

BUT IS THERE DESPOTISM about? Well, due process of law has been and is being violated—by the press. The *Washington Post* blandly admits it in a reply to the London *Times'* leader on "lynch-law." It claims the real point is whether the violation is "intolerable" or not, and whether "wringing of hands" over it is "pertinent." Good pseudo-democratic logic. Following a totally irrelevant what-if-it-happened-in-Britain wheeze, it concludes that the US is different. We may in effect lynch a man provided he happens to be President—and Richard Nixon. Leaving the *Post* covered with the tar it is using on Nixon, let's join the mob for a bit and suppose that Nixon *is* guilty. Never mind of what—guilty of something at any rate. Why worry about due process? Hang the bastard. In our hearts we know it's right. But—a trial? Oh, he's getting a trial, all right, and a very familiar sort of trial.

We are told that Senator Ervin's committee is not a court—only an enquiry to ascertain "the facts" and suggest corrective legislation. That is rather disingenuous; less kindly, it is pure bull. What they are "correcting" is not the law but the President, deliberately and consciously. Senator Inouye declared on British TV that the American people were expected to "make up their minds" about the guilt of the President as a result of the committee's evidence. By any social definition of the term, that makes the Ervin Committee a court, whatever hassles the Senators have among themselves. There are examples for such a "People's Court." They range from "*Paredón, paredón*" in Cuba back through Joe McCarthy, Mao's China, Stalin's Russia, Jacobin France and into England's own 17th-century Puritan tribunals, which only made public a process perfected earlier by the Holy Office: the *prima facie* assumption of guilt and a criterion for truth that works like this. Guilt confessed means truth, with rehearsed confessions just to make sure; guilt denied or not confessed means lies. (*NB*: Ervin's handling of Stans—oddly enough, the very incident misconstrued in Mary McCarthy's report.) With such standards in force I think Nixon is justified in refusing to appear before the committee.

But isn't it all so *satisfying*, so warming, entertaining? And nobody has actually been killed yet. So why

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knock it? But the vital issue remains: due process of law. The accused is assumed to be innocent. An official prosecutor (not the press, not a Congressional committee) serves as devil's advocate, trying to break that assumption with proven facts. He is hedged about with certain procedural rules to prevent What-We-Know-in-Our-Hearts from polluting those facts by pre-judging them or cheating in the selection of them. When this process is wrecked, by whomever or for whatever reason, the effect is to destroy the difference between those who judge and the man they condemn. "Guilt" is meaningless, and all we have is the mockery of a ritual, in which "justice" depends on nothing but the force used to compel it. Society moves toward a totalitarian conspiracy like that described by Hannah Arendt, with each isolated man against every other.

WE ARE NOT SO FAR—yet. But we have gone far enough.

". . . The story is told with relish of a special show put on by Kunz (von der Rosen, the Emperor Maximilian's Court fool) at one of the diets. Having tethered a fat pig to a stake in the market place, he assembled the blind people of the town, handed each of them a club and promised the pig to the one who killed it. To the accompaniment of roars of laughter from the princes and people, the blind, mad with greed, clubbed and belaboured each other in a bloody fight." (Richard Friedenthal, *Luther*, p. 6)

And what about the pig? Why should Nixon evoke such spite and vindictiveness?

Not just for his "abuse" of power: there are too many precedents, and in any case his weakness, not his strength is being condemned. The virulence of the feeling against him goes beyond legal questions and into the hazy realm of personality and image. Here certain facts are, as the *Washington Post* might say, "pertinent." Nixon himself has a terrible record for spite. He has been a harsh and uncharitable "prosecutor" himself, ruthless to weaker men, and women.

In the Margin:

A MORNING *and an afternoon at the Europa Hotel among the thousands of old books of the Antiquarian Book Fair, and I am somehow reminded of that scene on a Zürich shopping street which Cyril Connolly recorded in his diary in* **Horizon** *one day shortly after the end of the War—how he stood there, paralysed, dazzled by the store-windows full of golden watches, unable to move forward either to the glittering Omegas or the seductive Patek-Philippes. Should one now go to Leo Olschki who has brought along some of his best things from Florence (including a 1528 Castiglione, a 1567 Vitruvius, a 1588 Vasari)? Or to Maggs (who is offering a Flavius Josephus 1582 edition of the* **Jewish Wars** *for £30)? Or to Quaritch (who has put together a collection of books and pamphlets counterfeited by that master forger, T. J. Wise)?*

I begin at the stand of Alan Thomas who surely produces the most charmingly readable catalogue annotations of any bookseller in the country. He has expanded into the field of early Hebrew books, and notes:

". . . Of some 155 Hebrew books printed before 1500, about 20 are only known to survive in a single copy. How many have disappeared completely? In addition to the normal causes which make for the destruction of books, war, fire, damp, rats, left-wing students, children, spring-cleaning, disposal of the obsolete, etc., Hebrew books have been subjected to two further factors. One, they have been worn to pieces through intense study by generations of devoted scholars. . . . Secondly, they have been subjected to fiendish persecution. . . ."

I SEE THAT IT IS *Michael Foot who is to open the Fair; I wonder what happened to his father's great library, and I vow to call his attention to a rare edition of a youthful book by Cobbett on America which I spotted in a nook of the Fair. Nobody is more gently convincing than Michael Foot when he is not in his Jacobinical mood, and he says:*

". . . Being the son of a bibliphilial drunkard and having been instructed by him at an early age that the blessed disease was both hereditary and incurable, I quickly reconciled myself to my fate. Ever since he led me astray, bestowing the taste without the expert knowledge, I have been a reckless, ignorant, unashamed acquisitor, careless even of any encouragement of character-defects. No book collector, of course, can be an entirely honest man. He must on occasion boast to his booksellers and fellow collectors just as he may need, in pardonable extremities, to deceive his wife and starving family. He must learn, in defiance of his true nature, to be furtive and calculating; how else can each new investment be brought safely home unseen? . . ."

INVESTMENT? *Capitalism from the eloquent spokesman of the militant Left? How I wish he had instead preached socialism! I could then have expropriated that Cobbett and a fine Hazlitt edition for him. And also, if he would have accepted it, Marchamount Nedham's recantation of his Cromwellian views in 1661 (£85 from a bookseller in Sevenoaks, Kent). And there was a volume, if they would have accepted sequestered goods, for Professors Milton Friedman and Harry Johnson, the Chicago economists—"a Letter to Mr Locke" (1696) which offers* **A Review of the Universal Remedy for all Diseases Incident to Coin, with Application to our Present Circumstances.** *And this for Dr George Steiner—*

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He has been mean and unsporting in public, as when snarling back at the press for their hounding of him in California. Above (or beneath) all he is hopelessly unheroic: note how we are never allowed to forget the "Checkers" speech, when he was forgiven. But it was an uneasy forgiveness for many, and I doubt that "liberal" Americans with their highly developed taste for heroes, ever forgave him for cadging pardon as he did. I believe these people were and are outraged that such a man should be President at all, Watergate or no Watergate. Since, more or less accidentally, this ridiculous police-court scandal has laid him open to a dose of his own bile, the *Post*, Anthony Lewis and others of the *New York Times, Newsweek,* Mary McCarthy, etc., are slapping it to him with a sanctimoniousness that's nauseating to behold. That might not matter, and the exploitation of it by Senator Ervin and his political friends might not matter either. The Republic has survived such things before. What does seem dangerous and frightening is the phlegma with which the American public is taking to this ordure and liking it—59% for as to 12%, according to a Lou Harris poll in June.

Revenge and spite make for entertaining reading and television—rather as the burning of slaves entertained the Roman mob. But they are corroding the traditions of judicial process and adding to the cesspool of our American politics. Is the Presidency not going to be sapped by all this? A heroic figure could easily make it stronger than ever. What is rotting is the community of conscience and public sense of ritual decency without which our peculiar body politic cannot survive.

If lynch-law is such fun, so acceptable to so many Americans, then we are riding on naked emotion—with no real system, no safeguards and no protection against the "strong man", longed for by the mob and finally thrown up. *Such* corruption, not peculation and conspiracies "up there", is what weakens a democracy and breeds tyrants. One could mention Greece and Rome and historic examples; but the point is that we have no guardian angel to keep it

—*A Day at the Fair*—

Simboleography *(1622). And for those feisty gadflies of the contemporary scene, Kingsley Amis and Robert Conquest*—**The Scotch-Mist Cleared Up, to Prevent Englishmen from being Wet to the Skin, with Animadversions** *(1684; £28 from Deighton Bell in Cambridge). I would have given to any number of friends on both front benches in Parliament*—**The Government of the Tongue** *(1674). And to that tireless ideologue of the Right, Mr Peregrine Worsthorne—that soporific collection of Gollancz Left Book Club selections of the 1930s which my Highgate Village neighbour, Fisher & Sperr, is now prepared to dump (252 volumes for £425). And for Bernard Levin, relentless foe of legalistic humbuggery—an exposé (contemporary full panelled calf, slightly stained) of "the ignorance and arrogance of the common lawyers" entitled* **Ignoramus** *(1630).*

BUT CULTURE COSTS, *and nothing this side of the revolution is for free. If you are a student of polemics and want to know how the bitter fight between Newton and Leibnitz was triggered, then the 1699 volume* **Linae Brevissimi** *(Wing F.558 lists only three copies: in the Bodleian, Cambridge, and the Bibliothèque Nationale) can be had for £750. If you really want to know what Hobbes truly meant ("only in the Latin version did Hobbes really express his opinions") there is a Latin* **Leviathan** *for a mere £60. And if you cannot resist the temptations of titles like* **Enthusiasmus Triumphatus** *and* **Conjectura Cabbalistica** *then Howes of Hastings will give you this magnificent first edition (1662) of Henry More's writings for a fairly reasonable price.*

I WAS IRRESISTIBLY *tempted only once. A bibliophile I know reported that there was a book* **for me.** *No doubt, the Pierre Bayle* **Historical Dictionary** *which Hollings was offering. Or perhaps the* **Biblia Polyglota** *(Cardinal Ximenes' edition of 1522) in which one could use the Latin to work out the Greek, and the Hebrew to puzzle out the Chaldaic text. No, it was something very special, Item No 28 in the Hofmann & Freeman catalogue. Had I not written about Kant? Yes, I had. Had I not worked up an enthusiasm for Sir James Mackintosh? True. Was I not completing a chapter on Coleridge? Quite so. Then this surely was a book* **for me,** *and Ben Weinreb said I'd be a fool not to rush! Item No 28 was a Königsberg edition (1798) of Immanuel Kant's* **"Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht".** *It had been bought by Samuel Taylor Coleridge on his German journey, marked up and underscored and translated and annotated in his own hand. Subsequently he had given the volume away—to Mackintosh, who inscribed the flyleaf: "Given to me by Coleridge I think at the Lakes in 1801."*

Kant to Coleridge to Mackintosh: a hat trick, a triple play, too good to be true! I did rush, for it was indeed the book of a lifetime for me, almost as if history were secretly imitating my footnotes. My three very own revolutionaries—the German philosopher who abjured ideology, the radical English poet turned sceptic, the disenchanted Scottish ideologue who holds fast to humane ideals. Coleridge's copy of the first edition, "hitherto unrecorded", 8vo, old quarter calf, rubbed, rebacked, for only £200.

My rush was in vain. The bibliophilic miracle did not take place. The book had already been sold. I vowed on that day at the Fair that I would never get "drunk" with Michael Foot again.

M.J.L.

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from happening to us—only Lippmann's "self-restraint, objectivity of mind and magnanimity which are so rare in public life". They are sunk out of sight in American public life these days.

HERB GREER

Manchester

John Wain's "Saturday Night Out"

I HAVE READ "Swing High Swing Low" by John Wain (ENCOUNTER, July). As it happens I *have* kept in touch with most of my contemporaries who like me were born into poor working-class families and now live in comfortable middle-class homes. Without exception they are the liveliest, most individual, and integrated of all my friends—very far from the "guess" of Mr Wain's imagination. In fact I would rather spend five minutes in their company than five hours in the company of the average dentist's son.

The "Hell's Angel" boy in the article was dressed as a "warrior girded for combat" because we haven't had a war for thirty years. Everyone has to have someone or something to hate, and if it doesn't go outside it will go inside. The trick is to sublimate it. Why does Mr Wain feel such horror at stupidity? It doesn't bother me that my hairdresser is stupid. Why should it? She thinks I'm quaint too, but we get along quite amicably.

I see no answer in the political solutions suggested by Mr Wain. One thing is certain. The stupid we shall always have with us. A more sane solution would be a return to Christian values. After all everyone is equal at the altar rail.

As for routine work. Do you know I have been changing my babies' nappies four times a day solidly for the last ten years! As for "endowing the stupid with a human face": what does he think thousands of women are doing every day of their lives and have been doing for centuries? Do we not care for our families, friends, neighbours, acquaintances regardless, without actually measuring their IQ? In general I think Mr Wain has been led up the creek by his typically masculine intellectualisations and if you like I'll write an article to prove it!

(MRS) JEAN FOX, B.A.

London

JOHN WAIN'S elegantly reasoned piece in your July issue [Swing High, Swing Low] unfortunately misses the point. If it were the case that society's division was solely between those with energy and intelligence and those who—through no fault of their own—haven't the wit and stamina to make the grade, supporters of the system might have a faint glimmer of a case.

As it is, the truth is considerably less attractive. In fact, society's lower strata contain tens of thousands—maybe hundreds of thousands—of men and women with intellectual qualities, irrespective of individual educational levels, way above those of their peers. And I use the word intellectual in its broader dictionary sense.

Whatever the opportunity, intellectual skills are no guarantee of advancement. Society tends to give pride of place with impunity to strutters, line-shooters, cheats and the ruthless, in much the same way that women often with pre-knowledge of the consequences fall for what in my younger days used to be called a cad. Thus, although there are many members of our society who see themselves for ever categorised as second-class citizens through lack of ability, there are many others who collectively form a vast untapped reservoir of intelligence which could undoubtedly be used to help lift the system out of its present morass.

So long as the self-contained establishment persists in hugging tightly to its chest all the means of dealing with the problems that Mr Wain describes, so will the bitterness increase among the gamma-men. But of greater import, those citizens who know that they have something to offer but cannot do so because to reach a position where their skills will be noticed they must compete on terms that are morally unacceptable, are unfortunately turning away in disgust and leaving the field wide open to even greater abuses.

This, then, is the true weight of the tragedy.

GEORGE JAFFA

Whitstable,
Kent

YOUR REF: Article by John Wain, July 1973 issue ["Swing High, Swing Low"].

CONCORDE AND CULTURE*

"Hypocrite John Wain, mon semblable, mon frère"

PIERRE YOUNG
Director of Engineering
formerly
Chief Engineer,
Concorde Engines

Rolls-Royce Ltd.,
Derby Engine Division

*p. 8, col. 2: "How many of the men responsible for *Concorde*, for instance, ever sit down and read a poem?"

"Ideology & No End"

I AM SURPRISED at some of Professor Lewis Feuer's comments [ENCOUNTER, April] about my article in the December 1972 ENCOUNTER, "Ideology and No End." He singles out my reference to him as a "former Marxist" as characteristic of "ideology", not of science or scholarship, and then he goes on to characterise me as "a former Trotskyite-Burnhamite" as a supposedly equally irrelevant counter-comment.

But if Professor Feuer could bring himself to re-read my article, he would see that I also describe Raymond Aron as "once a Gaullist", Ralf Dahrendorf as having once been "an active socialist", and Thomas Molnar as "a conservative political theorist." The point of these and other political characterisations was to indicate the breadth of the political backgrounds, running from extreme left to conservative, of those who have presented a varient of the "decline" or "end of ideology" thesis. The political or philosophical backgrounds and commitments are, therefore, a central part of the effort to fill in the proper background of the subject.

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Death of a Bookstore

New York City

ONCE EVERY FIVE *or six weeks, on a day when my work has gone very well or very badly, I take the 104 bus up to Columbia University, where I lunch on ghastly food in those Broadway joints the students seem to like, glance through the little magazines in the nearby stores, and spend half an hour at the Columbia University bookshop. I've been doing this for eight or nine years now, as a way of passing some time in contented aloneness. Usually I buy a book or two at the Columbia store, telling myself that I "need" them, and sometimes that's even true.*

A few weeks ago I again undertook this ritual journey, went to the Columbia bookshop—and suffered mild shock. It was no longer there. It had been replaced by a "new bookstore," sublet to Barnes & Noble, featuring paperback texts used in classes. (Also, about 30 hardcover new books, half of them written by Columbia professors—distinguished volumes, no doubt, but comprising a somewhat narrow selection.)

Those tempting shelves of solid, hardcover history, philosophy and sociology, those generous selections of poetry, fiction, literary criticism and classics—some of them published as far back as four or five years ago!—all gone. In their place, a dispirited, mediocre paperback store, better, to be sure, than the one at the college where I teach, but not, by the most generous description, a serious bookshop.

It seems a pity, a real loss for those few thousand people in New York who care about books, and a loss too for Columbia, probably the most distinguished university in the city. For if it's important to provide students with first-rate physics labs, gyms and professors, then it's also important that they learn what a first-rate bookshop looks like. They might try it; they might like it. At Columbia they no longer can.

A LITTLE WHILE AFTER *this piece appears in print there will probably arrive at the Book Review a letter from a Columbia vice-president saying that the university, caught in a budget squeeze, had to abandon its once-distinguished bookshop because it was losing a sizable number of dollars each year. Perhaps by way of reply, I'll say that Columbia should feel obliged to subsidize a bookshop for the same reasons that it subsidizes other educational facilities, or perhaps I'll get irritable and snap something about cutting the number of academic bureaucrats in order to have enough money for the things that really matter. But whatever answer I give won't be easy or entirely persuasive, since it's foolish to look down one's nose at the financial problems of universities like Columbia. Those problems are all too real.*

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER *reality: that in the whole of New York, with its many universities, we don't have a bookshop that could match in range and depth of holdings a store like Blackwell's in Oxford or the stores one sees in Rome and Paris and even a provincial town like Palermo. We have the Gotham Book Mart, fine for literary people, and the Eighth Street Bookstore, fine for recent and topical books; but we don't have a store that will stock, as the one at Columbia used to, both recent and not-so-recent books of intellectual substance, a store that will also carry, say, the Everyman series and perhaps even a few Loeb Classics.*

IT'S A SCANDAL. *Not one of the major scandals in this sad and beaten city, nothing to arouse the indignation that a score of our injustices can or should still arouse; but a scandal nevertheless. And in saying this I'm aware of the problems that publishers and booksellers will cite: the high rents, the excessive number of books published each year, the small sales of serious books, the sheer cost of keeping a book on the shelves for more than a few months.*

All true enough, but not reason enough. For we should not accept in regard to a small matter like a comprehensive bookshop the argument that we ought also to reject in regard to large matters like poverty, schools and employment—the argument, I mean, that circumstances must overwhelm intentions, that policy creates its own defeats, and that in an admittedly complex world the best we can do is to reflect upon our sense of complexity.

Is there a solution? Perhaps the publishers could get together and jointly run their own "Blackwell's in New York." Perhaps a few hundred writers could invest a thousand dollars each . . . but what a nightmare: Imagine a stockholders meeting at which everyone keeps screaming that his or her book isn't being given adequate display. Perhaps a wealthy young man in love with letters would do for bookselling what James Laughlin did for avant-garde publishing some decades ago. Perhaps a bookseller both high-minded and shrewd could make a go of a first-rate bookshop.

ALL RATHER UNLIKELY, *all tokens of fantasy? Probably so. Yet the fact remains that serious books, never to be best sellers, do get published, there are people who might buy them if they could so much as get a look at them—and that gets harder and harder.*

Irving Howe
in the NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

IRVING HOWE *is professor of English at the City University of New York and the editor of "Dissent". His most recent book is "The Decline of the New."*

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Professor Feuer himself, in his comments, documents the relevance of his Marxist "period" to this discussion since he notes that he wrote and published an article in 1942, in the Marxist review *Science and Society*, whose theme was "the obsolescence of ethical ideology." He indicates that this article "closed the Marxist phase in my personal intellectual history." It would seem, then, that my including a reference to his Marxist period (in the context of citing him as one of the early proponents of the thesis) makes some sense. His over-reaction to it is all the more puzzling.

As for Professor Feuer's discussion of the history of what he calls the "New York School of Sociology", it only points up the difficulty of relying on memory when reporting history. He links the concerns of Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer, Philip Selznick, Alvin Gouldner and myself to the "Trotsky problem" and the "failure" of the working class. These five individuals did all have radical backgrounds. But they ranged widely from Bell's "Menshevism," Glazer's "Luxemburgianism," Selznick's and my adherence to diverse forms of Trotskyism, to Gouldner's quite different youthful commitments. As for Bell, he was never a student of Merton. Nor could he or Glazer be described as having shifted from the use of "Marxist language to the functionalist one." A last and very minor item. For the historical record (and for those who may be misled by "Alcove" mythology), Professor Feuer is wrong in his statement that I was "the one majority-Trotskyist at City College." There were others.

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET

Harvard University,
Cambridge, Mass.

The "Complexities" of Roger Casement

Brian Inglis on David Rudkin's Interpretation

READING David Rudkin's "The Chameleon and the Kilt" (August) shows me I was churlish to his radio play. Hearing it—without the benefit of a script—I got the impression that Roger Casement's nationalism was being attributed to his homosexuality—which provoked my opprobrious comment. It is now clear from Mr Rudkin's article that his thesis was more subtle, and convincing.

With virtually everything that he says about Casement, I am in agreement—including his comment that there is something missing from my book: "a living sense of Casement *the man*". The explanation, I think, is provided by Mr Rudkin himself when he notes that different handwritings in the Casement diaries emerge not merely (as I had observed) at different times, and in different moods, but distinct "for each persona". There wasn't one Casement; there were a number of personalities sheltering under his outwardly coherent exterior.

It is difficult enough for a biographer to utilise the information that Freud and his successors have given us about unconscious mental and emotional processes, without wandering too far from the verifiable. But with split personalities we are in an even more difficult position, because the mechanics of dissociation are not understood. One aspect of it —schizophrenia—has been researched assiduously, if not very productively. Another—mediumship—is quite familiar, though it has not attracted much in the way of research. But the aspect most commonly encountered in everyday life is still largely ignored. Occasionally a case history, like the one described in the book and the film *The Three Faces of Eve*, attracts some attention; but we are a long way from achieving understanding of why and how such cases occur.

HOW, THEN, WOULD a biographer provide "a living sense of Jekyll the man"—as soon as it becomes known that there was also Hyde? Stevenson's story went out of favour, clinically-speaking, when more came to be known about schizophrenia. It was assumed that he had misunderstood the nature of the problem. But Stevenson was not writing about a schizophrenic. He was describing a different kind of dissociation; and his diagnosis was misleading only to the extent that the opposing forces were good and evil—over-simplifying the issue. A similar struggle for mastery over the personality is far more common, I suspect, than we realise; the most frequently encountered specimen, in my experience, being the individual who changes his persona under the influence of alcohol, or of some sudden emotion.

Where the individual concerned has described his symptoms, as Evelyn Waugh did, a biographer may find it possible to stitch the personae together. But where such descriptive material is lacking, his task becomes thankless. There are living at this moment, for example, two men who might have been Prime Minister, both of whom I have seen dissociate on television (so, probably, have you). But when their lives come to be written, the chances are that their behaviour will be attributed (if it is mentioned at all) to aberration under stress, rather than to the existence of a second self which periodically demanded autonomy, and seized it. Nor would it be easy, even for the most sympathetically disposed of commentators, to describe the man, in any living sense, when what has to be described is in fact two men.

MY PRESENTATION OF Casement the homosexual, Mr Rudkin feels, is "unsatisfactory and oblique, insufficiently drawn from Casement himself." That is correct; and it makes me the more grateful to Mr Rudkin for filling in the picture in the way an artist alone can do.

BRIAN INGLIS

London

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Swap, Swop

THINGS HAVE CLEARLY gone further than I had thought. In your May issue it is reported by *R*—a reliable cartographer of our moral, political, and cultural decline—that amongst drug-addiction, pornography and mugging, we must count as a new evil a practice which he refers to as *wife-swopping*. I don't know what it is, but I don't think that I like the sound of it.

Now *wife-swapping* I have encountered. Not personally you understand, but from time to time our local papers report that this or that village is rife with wife-swapping. These assertions are usually made on the basis of denunciations from the pulpits of knowledgeable clergy.

But wife-swopping is clearly a new metropolitan vice which has yet to spread to these parts. It suggests to me yet another practice which conflates sex and violence. The wife who is swopped clearly has something physical done to her. Is an implement or device employed? If so, is it only to be obtained from one of those pernicious sex supermarkets? Is "correction" involved in any way? Do practitioners swop their own wives or the wives of others? Does husband-swopping occur? I really would like your guidance. And so would my wife.

P.S. Is "swopping" an older word which has been pressed back into service? I do abhor this practice. *Swiving*, resurrected by John Barth and others, conveys a totally misleading kinesic image of the act to which it refers—like so many of its synonyms.

ERIC HOYLE

Bristol

-ap & -op

ED. NOTE:—Alas, no intriguing new vice has been reported in *R*'s "Column". If we play the game by Fowler's rules, and not according to Hoyle, we find in *Modern English Usage*: "swap, swop. The OED prefers *-ap*, but *-op* is probably now commoner and is preferred by the COD."

Terrorists & Ideologists

RE Segre & Adler's "The Ecology of Terrorism" and the short insert by Sebastian Haffner entitled "A Modest Proposal" (ENCOUNTER, February).

The Archie Bunker approach to curb highjackings is to pass out guns to all the passengers upon boarding the aircraft. In an equally serious vein Sebastian Haffner offers an equally technological, albeit more humane, solution to the same problem. He writes modestly enough;

> "I am no aircraft manufacturer but even a layman can see that highjackings would at least be rendered very much more difficult if the flight decks were permanently sealed off from the passenger area by a bullet-proof partition."

Continuing, he even offers to the pilots some amenities which presumably would make up for the inconveniences of isolation resulting from the use of a bullet-proof partition.

> "One could always install a fridge and a WC in the inaccessible cockpit."

Even with these precautions Haffner does go on to admit of the possibility of the highjacker menacing the passengers and the stewardesses, but even in such a case Haffner offers us a contingency plan.

> ". . . a gas duct operable from the pilot's seat which could if need be, fill the passenger cabin with a fast-working but harmless anaesthetic."

In consolation for this discomfort to be suffered by the passengers he assures them and the highjacker of a safe sleep for the remainder of the flight. Then, so as not to neglect anyone concerned Haffner also assures whatever airline company that might install these admittedly expensive devices a good monetary return once it advertises "Our planes are highjack-proof."

The more analytical and better thought-out Segre & Adler article exhibits a naïveté not too dissimilar to the Haffner approach in so far as it also provides simple answers to complex social questions. (I assume that this was ENCOUNTER's rationale for printing them together.) In fact, more-so that naïveté much of what they say betrays a certain Philistinism. This is particularly true as they quite casually dismiss the motivating force that Ideology commands in the activities of terrorists (". . . all ideology [is] quite secondary and often irrelevant. . . ."). Instead, we are asked to accept the dubious proposition that regards all terrorists as "sociopaths" who, according to the definition cited, behave "in an anti-social way . . ." and are characterised by Segre & Adler (neither of whom have credentials as psychologists) as either "geniuses" or as "idiots."

One less temperate than myself, and one who is not reluctant to "psychologise" about their psychologising, would most likely characterise their position as Zionist. Beyond that, however, evidence which I have gathered during my association with Japanese "terrorists" (who, incidentally, Segre & Adler refer to in their article) suggests not only that they see their "struggles" as ideologically based but that also they apparently fail to fall exclusively into the categories of "genius" or "idiot." ("The Narita Struggle," presented at the 16th International Conference of Orientalists in Tokyo on 15 May, 1971.) Nor do they reap any material rewards from their activity as Segre & Adler suggest, other than (as Segre & Adler correctly argue) those accruing from activity in harmony with their own standards and needs. On the contrary, evidence *suggests* that a self-awareness of the material and emotional deprivation experienced sustain them in their endeavours.

No doubt that terrorism is bad, just as one would not argue against the *Grundnorm* which declares life to be better than death. Still, merely to dismiss the behaviour that characterises terrorists as anti-social or as "sociopathic" is at worst pejorative and at best ignores the bases of motivation, among which might very well be the ideological. To argue to the contrary, it seems to me, is to consider only the effects of terrorist activity and to ignore its causes, and moreover to put yourself into the company of those, who,

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in Segre & Adler's words, "lack [the] understanding of the nature and implications of modern violence...."

ROGER BOWEN

Department of Political Science,
University of British Columbia,
Canada

WE ARE FULLY aware of the complex social and ideological motivation of terror. A point in our argument was that people who appoint themselves judge, jury, and executioner of random victims and perpetrators of mayhem against targets of convenience may be "sociopaths," regardless of the merits of their cause. We could, with some justice, be accused of understating the case.

Because of the confusion between sloganized revolutionary motivation and self-fulfillment, any and all forms of violence have achieved a certain fashionable respectability in some circles. We are aware of the fact that groups who manipulate terrorism—including those who cover murder with the cloak of ideology—obviously understand "the nature and implications of modern violence". It is precisely against these operators that we hoped to raise a warning cry.

D. V. SEGRE & J. H. ADLER

Haifa University

20 Years On

OUR NEXT ISSUE *will celebrate our first two decades of monthly publication—a unique achievement for any comparable magazine in modern times. Published in the third week of September, it will be larger than usual and will contain, among other things, contributions from:*

William Trevor
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François Bondy
Ludovic Kennedy
Arthur Koestler
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Stephen Toulmin
Joachim Fest
Leszek Kolakowski
Melvin J. Lasky
Anthony Hartley
Raymond Aron

Readers who do not receive ENCOUNTER *regularly are advised to order their copy now—this issue may sell out, and may well become a collector's piece.*

INDEX TO VOLUME XL

THE INDEX to Volume XL (January-June 1973) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have already applied to be put on the standing order list need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically.

AUTHORS

Peter Redgrove's latest volume of poems was *Dr Faust's Sea-Spiral Spirit*; his first novel, *In the Country of the Skin*, appeared this year (Routledge). . . .

Molly M. Mahood is Professor of English Literature at the University of Kent and the author of *Poetry and Humanism* and *Shakespeare's Wordplay*. She delivered the British Academy's annual Shakespeare lecture in 1972, and is now working on a study of the novel and colonial experience. . . .

Hilton Kramer is a leading American art critic. His collection of critical essays, *The Age of the Avant-Garde*, will be published later this year by Secker & Warburg (London) and Farrar, Straus (New York). He is just completing a history of modern art. . . .

Jonathan Power is a free-lance journalist, broadcaster and film-maker, specialising in race relations and economic affairs. In 1966 he worked on the staff of Martin Luther King, and his book on Black emancipation in America since 1955, *Out of the Woodpile*, will be published this year. . . .

Philip Larkin's citation was made at the University of Hull when it recently bestowed the degree of Doctor of Letters on Sir John Betjeman. . . .

Henry Miller was formerly Dean of Medicine and Professor of Neurology in the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, of which he is now Vice-Chancellor. His previous articles in ENCOUNTER include "Reflections in a Hospital" (September 1972), "The Abuse of Psychiatry" (May 1970), and "New Doctors' Dilemmas" (March 1969). . . .

John Holloway is Professor of Modern English in the University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Queen's College. Among his frequent contributions to ENCOUNTER are two pieces on the folk tale and folk lore (October 1970 and April 1972). "Sincerely, Lionel Trilling" is a version of a BBC Radio 3 broadcast. . . .

Jonathan Raban's book on living in cities, *Soft City*, will be published by Hamish Hamilton early next year. . . .

Richard Findlater is an Assistant Editor of *The Observer* and Editor of *The Author*. He has written several books on the theatre; the most recent, *The Player Kings*, was published by Weidenfeld in 1971. . . .

The material for the **Blaug/King** article on the Arts Council was gathered under a Social Science Research Council grant to Professor A. T. Peacock of the University of York and Professor Mark Blaug of the Institute of Education, University of London. . . .

Michael Egan and David Craig were formerly colleagues in the English Department at Lancaster. Their *Extreme Situations: Literature and Society 1870–1945* will be completed shortly. . . .

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London

COPSE & ROBBERS: What did the lieutenant really say to Macbeth when he saw Burnham Wood moving towards Dunsinane Castle?

Answer: "Boss, de copse is comin'."

FINANCIAL TIMES

Oxford

PROPERTY IS THEFT: *Can there be the odd undergraduate who has been half-way out of the door of Blackwell's, the famous Oxford bookshop, only for a copy of "Trotsky: the Prophet Armed" by I. Deutscher to emerge from his flared trouser leg, or a paperback of "The State and Revolution," by V. I. Lenin, to fall out of his Afro hairstyle?*

According to Mr Richard Blackwell in the Oxford Magazine, *more than 80 thieves have been detected in the shop in the past year—90% of whom have been students or, in a few cases, senior academics. As reported, the thieves "tend to concentrate on books about economics, politics and sociology, particularly those with a Left-wing flavour."*

So it has proved necessary for the quasi-Fascist instruments of class repression—themselves the inevitable manifestations of a post-industrial corporate capitalism in its final stages of dissolution—to be brought into play by a frightened ruling élite in a determined, though ultimately doomed, attempt to preserve profits.

Yes: Blackwell's, true to the role assigned it by the dialectic of history, has found it necessary to "concentrate Marxist literature in a section that can be kept under special surveillance." The management's hope, then, is to put an end to this novel interpretation, among local Marxists, of the theory of surplus value—to catch them red-handed, in fact.

Meanwhile, over in the largest State ever to proclaim itself Marxist, the rulers may sadly reflect: "If only we had such problems!" In the Soviet Union, the special surveillance would be needed to get people to read the stuff, let alone pinch it. Still, the revolutionaries of Oxon may take comfort: Proudhon, who first proclaimed that property was theft, would have been proud of them.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

New York

DIABOLICAL: Fawcett Crest, the paperback publisher, reports two of its current novels, "The Sorcerers" and "Diabolus," were written by convicted Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt Jr. under the pen name David St. John. Both books feature a U.S. secret intelligence agent named Peter Ward, of whom the reviewer for New York's other morning paper [the "New York Times"] wrote: "If the U.S.A. had a few secret agents like Peter Ward, we could all rest easier in our beds." Ha! . . .

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Edinburgh

OF TERROR, TWITS AND TICKING-OFF: *Princess Anne met two little "terrors" yesterday—and gave them a ticking-off.*

The first was little William Campbell, a nine-year-old at a new adventure playground in Niddrie, Edinburgh, run by the Save The Children Fund, of which she is president. William, of Wardhope Place, Niddrie, told Anne: "I'm a Niddrie Terror. I bash the Cumbies." He was referring to two rival gangs. The Princess looked surprised and told him: "I don't like terrors."

Then 13-year-old Katherine Graham, of Niddrie Mains Drive, asked Anne if she could see her engagement ring. The Princess asked if she was a terror too, and when the youngster said: "Yes," Anne repeated: "I don't like terrors," and walked on.

In a playroom the Princess visited small boys who kept up a chant of "Terror." As she left she turned to the children and called them "twits."

DAILY MAIL/DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

PIPED ENGLISH: The English language is meant for men, and more especially for those who smoke pipes. Reason: Pipe smoking leads to a sort of "chewing the cud" motion—and that is essential for good English pronounciation. Anyway, that's what it says here in Jean Oger's new book "The English at Home."

DAILY MAIL

Helsinki

ALPHABETICS: *The European Security talks are taking place in Dipoli, a very beautiful modern conference and entertainment centre on the outskirts of Helsinki, full of strange angles, grottoes, wood, concrete and natural rock. It was built by a Finnish student union and the brochure promises "work, celebration, Scandinavian sex, freedom of choice."*

In spite of these potential distractions the talks have surmounted their first problems fairly smoothly. The seating was to have been in English alphabetical order but the West Germans objected to being listed as the Federal Republic of Germany since this would have left the German Democratic Republic with a stronger claim on the word "German".

The alphabet was smoothly changed to French and under the illogical rules of international compromise the two Germanies now share the top of the list, described as "République Fédérale d'Allemagne" and "République Démocratique Allemande."

THE TIMES

Princeton

PERVERTED: Princeton students had to start seeking new diversions today following the defeat of the Perverto slate in the election to the Undergraduate Assembly.

The ticket, which had campaigned on a platform of "mindless perversion," lost to more traditional candidates led by Andrew Strenio, who was elected Assembly president.

The Perverto campaign, which had captivated the campus in recent weeks, was credited with helping to produce a record 75 per cent turnout in the election Wednesday night. Richard Goodman, the Perverto presidential candidate, drew 1,259 votes to the 1,364 received by Mr. Strenio, whose running mates also won election.

NEW YORK TIMES

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Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal

Edited by Penderel Moon

'To anyone who cares about India or about the decline of the empire it is of the deepest interest.' – John Rosselli in *The Guardian*. 'The journals leave one with respect and admiration unimpaired; heightened, in fact, by the clarity with which he expressed his innermost feelings and by his sense of humour.' – Paul Scott in *The Times*. 25 plates endpaper maps £8

Capodistria

The Founder of Greek Independence

C.M. Woodhouse

This is the first full-scale biography of Capodistria to appear in any language since 1864. Capodistria (1776–1831) was the first Greek for nearly 400 years to play an influential part in European politics; he remains to this day a controversial figure. 'A vivid and lucid . . . enthralling biography, packed with incidents and insights . . . at once scholarly and popular.' – *Sunday Times* Frontispiece 2 maps £10

Son of Guyana

Arnold Apple

'From as far back in my life as I could remember, life was a long terrifying struggle'. Thus begins the autobiography of Arnold Apple, who was born in Dalgin, Guyana. He describes in vivid, refreshing style his childhood and youth there, his travels in Europe, and his arrival in England, where for the first time he saw notices saying 'No coloureds, please'. £3 paper covers 90p *Three Crowns Books*

Family and Fortune

Lawrence Stone

This book complements the author's *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641*. In that volume the various forces at work to strengthen or undermine aristocratic family fortunes were examined one by one. Here the material is arranged as a series of narrative family histories, showing how personality, biological accident, and more general forces in society interacted to determine the fortunes of one family after another over a two hundred year period. 7 plates 3 text figures £4·50

Henri Michaux

Malcolm Bowie

Michaux is one of the most important and original French poets of the century, but even today, a suggestion made by André Gide in the early forties is still to the point: *Découvrons Henri Michaux*. This book provides a survey of Michaux's work which reveals the diversity of his talents and analyses in detail the complex texture of his writings. 3 text figures £5

Britain's Legacy Overseas

Geoffrey C. Bolton

Most existing accounts of the British Empire are anglocentric. This book traces the two-way interaction between Britain and her Empire, showing how the colonies and former colonies could use and influence the mother country. The author discusses the strategic and economic motives for building the Empire, and describes the ways in which British customs and institutions were adopted and adapted overseas. £1·30 paper covers 65p OPUS

Oxford

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